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Winter's Tale, Act V, Scene 3.

After the death of the Prince Consort (1861) the Queen ceased to attend all public functions. In 1865 (the date of the cartoon) public opinion began to demand her reappearance. But the Queen still felt herself unequal to the strain.

(*See p.* 199)

THE TRANSITION FROM ARISTOCRACY

1832–1867

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PASSING OF THE REFORM BILL, THE CAUSES WHICH LED UP TO IT, & ITS FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES ON THE LIFE & MANNERS OF ALL GRADES OF SOCIETY

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BY

O. F. CHRISTIE, M.A.(OXON.)

AUTHOR OF "THE SHADOW: A PASTORAL"
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"The common sense of this country and the fifty-pound clause will carry us through," said the duke.

"Through what?" inquired his son.

"This—this state of transition," replied his father.

"A passage to what?"

"Ah! that is a question the wisest cannot answer."

Tancred, or The New Crusade.

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To
THE MEMORY OF MY DEAR SON
PAUL

PREFACE

IN the period which is the subject of the following pages there are three outstanding events of great consequence: the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, the accession of Queen Victoria, and the coming of the railways. The repeal of the Corn Laws, another great event, was only an inevitable sequel of Reform; this might have been foreseen by any statesman who realized that the rule of Aristocracy had ended.

Of these events the greatest by far was the passing of the Reform Bill, and I have endeavoured to trace some of its effects as they ramified in the Court, in Politics, in Parties and in Social Life. All these felt the new democratic force, which was again strengthened by the new mode of cheap and swift and easy travel. But much of Aristocracy survived.

Wise men understood what had happened in 1832. Lyndhurst said in 1835 that the Reform Bill had effected a greater revolution than that of 1688. Twenty years later Greville pronounced it as great as that of 1789: "Without any violent or ostensible disturbance, or any change in external forms, this country has undergone as great a revolution as France itself." And he quoted Guizot, who had recently written that England was "*dans une époque de transition . . . sous l'empire des principes et des sentiments encore confus, perplexes et obscurs, mais essentiellement démocratiques.*"

It is the *transitional* character of the epoch that makes it peculiarly interesting—with its survivals of old customs and traditions, and its omens of coming changes. We, of course, can understand better than our grandfathers whither the transition was tending, but the end of the process is still hidden; and Guizot's words still hold good,

"*personne ne saurait dire encore quel sera le vrai et dernier résultat.*"

In an Appendix I have given a list of books consulted ; but I have abstained from notes, except when it seemed proper to adduce an authority or acknowledge a source. Our information about the whole Victorian Age, and all its content, is so vast that, as Mr Lytton Strachey says, "the industry of a Ranke would be submerged by it, and the perspicacity of a Gibbon would quail before it." But I venture to think that from a manageable quantity of histories, biographies, memoirs, essays, speeches and novels may be extracted a true idea of how the political and social scene was changing between the dates of the first and second Reform Bills.

I beg to thank the Proprietors of *Punch* for their very kind permission to reproduce the cartoons which illustrate these pages. No one can hope to understand the Early Victorians without studying *Punch*. *Punch* was the mirror that reflected the opinions of "The Man in the Street" or—to use a then current phrase—"The Man in the Twopenny Omnibus." Like many of his contemporaries, Mr Punch in these years developed from a Radical, prone to make bitter comments on the Royal Family, into a respectable and moderate Whig, the sort of Whig that looked askance at John Bright. How invaluable would an eighteenth-century *Punch* have been to the historians of that era!—and how illuminating as a "middle-class" supplement to the *Memoirs* of Lord Hervey and the *Letters* of Horace Walpole!

My "Chronology" is of course not meant to be a complete chronicle of the period. It comprises only the events, important or otherwise, mentioned in my essay ; to this extent it may be of convenience to the reader.

O. F. C.

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THE TRANSITION FROM ARISTOCRACY

I

THE OLD SYSTEM

The Old System—Great Houses—London Palaces—Sport—Benevolent Magnates—*Status* of a "Gentleman"—Duelling—Drunkenness—Life & Conversation—Large Families—Public Schools—Eton—Land & Borough Influence—Why Whigs became Reformers—The Grenvilles gain a Dukedom—Election Expenses—Close Boroughs—The M.P.'s Importance—The Church of England—An Archbishop's Pomp—Wealth of Churchmen—Sufferings of the Poor—Degeneration of Toryism—End of "Dukism"

A WRITER who would endeavour to describe the England of 1832 by comparing it with *The State of England in 1685*, as given in Macaulay's famous chapter, would find many extraordinary differences. He would have to tell of a population increased fourfold, and of the growth of Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Sheffield into great cities from inconsiderable towns. He would contrast the strength and prestige of Wellington's army and Nelson's navy with an army that consisted of a few Household troops and a navy whose ships were often commanded by army officers and aristocratic amateurs. He would tell of Enclosure Acts and how a quarter of England had been "turned from a wilderness into a garden." He would find much to say of the enormous and perplexing effects of the Industrial Revolution. He would also, doubtless, dwell upon the improvement in the education of the Upper Classes, the better roads and communications, the gradual suppression of highwaymen, and the development of newspapers from news-sheets. But in one respect he would note a much smaller measure of change—in the predominance of the peers and landed gentry over all the other classes of the community.

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Exalted above noble and squire there was, indeed, in 1685 a King who claimed Divine Right, but within three years the nation had

"flung the burden of the Second James,"

so that the period from 1688 to 1832 presents a continuous picture of aristocratic rule.

The possession of large landed estates, inherited from generations of predecessors, gave their owners a commanding influence, both social and political; and the social part of it survived with little diminution through the nineteenth century, and is still far from dying. At the beginning of that century the great noble lived in princely style, and his hospitalities were a measure of his wealth. The Duke of Devonshire, "The King of the Peak," was perhaps the first subject of the realm.[1] Of his way of life Greville records (1829): "The party was immense, 40 people sat down to dinner every day, and about 150 servants in the steward's room and servants' hall." When Queen Victoria visited the sixth Duke in 1843 he "treated the Queen right royally. He met her at the station and brought her in his own coach and six, with a coach and four following, and eight outriders." Each great house had its traditions. Chatsworth's traditions were semi-regal. The Duke of Rutland wrote to Croker of his visit: "There was added at Chatsworth a splendour and magnificence to which I neither did nor could aspire." But Belvoir could not have been far behind Chatsworth in pomp. There the band of the Duke's militia regiment marched round the terrace in the morning, "awakening or quickening the guests with lively airs. . . . At dinner there is a different display of plate every day. . . . On the Duke's birthday (1834) there was a great feast in the Castle: 200 people dined in the servants' hall alone, without counting the other tables. We were about forty at dinner." At Petworth Lord Egremont kept three hundred horses, and in 1834 feasted six hundred persons in his park. Petworth "was like a great inn. Everybody came when they thought fit, and departed without notice or leave-taking."

The management of the Duke of Bedford's estate at Woburn was "like the administration of a little kingdom." Thirty years later Disraeli wrote of Woburn: "It is a principality." At Hatfield, in 1793, five hundred poor were fed twice a week; "for six weeks at Xmas the House full of Company, eating and drinking all day long." [2]

Each great house had its distinguishing tradition of politics, or literature, or sport. At Bowood Greville met Moore, Rogers, Macaulay, Charles Austin, and other men of wit and learning, spending his time "among the cultivated and the wise." At Badminton "the stable and the kennel formed the principal topic of interest." Badminton seems always to have been celebrated for hospitality and sport. Lord Keeper Guilford, writing in the reign of Charles the Second of the first Duke of Beaufort, praised "the princely way of living which that noble Duke used," and Lord Ribblesdale remarked that these words might have been written of Badminton in the "sixties" of the nineteenth century.[3] Even in the later "seventies" the Duke kept one hundred and forty-seven horses. His daughter-in-law, Lady Henry Somerset, has described what she truly calls "the eighteenth-century freedom of Badminton" of about this time—scenes and incidents to which the pen of Fielding would have done justice.

The London palaces of these great noblemen were as luxurious as their rural mansions. "The night before last," Greville writes (1835), "there was a great concert on the staircase at Stafford House, the most magnificent assembly I ever saw, and such as I think no crowned head in Europe could display, so grand and picturesque. The appearance of the hall was exactly like one of Paul Veronese's pictures. . . . The splendour, the profusion, and the perfect ease of it all were really admirable."

This was the magnificence that captured the imagination of the youthful Disraeli, and is so often the theme of his novels and letters. He revels in entertainments that were graced by "Princes of the Blood and grandees of the Golden Fleece." In *Endymion* Zenobia arrives at a party "with

avant-courier and outriders and badged postilions on her four horses of race." The ball at Crecy House (in *Lothair*) was "a sumptuous festival. The palace, resonant with fantastic music, blazed amid illuminated gardens." At Lothair's own country seat "half a dozen powdered gentlemen, glowing in crimson liveries, indicated the presence of my Lord's footmen." Nor can any reader of *Tancred* ever forget the accumulation of splendid ceremonies that marked the "week of celebration" when young Lord Montacute came of age. At York, as a very young man, Disraeli was enraptured by "the four-in-hands of the Yorkshire squires, the splendid rivalry in livery and outriders, and the immense quantity of gorgeous equipages." "D——d fair for the provinces!" would have been Creevey's comment on this display.

When these great proprietors sought relaxation in sport, the *battues* were on the same extensive scale. At Woburn, writes Greville (1820), "the *chasse* was brilliant; in five days we killed 835 pheasants, 645 hares, 59 rabbits, 10 partridges and 5 woodcocks. We shot the whole week and killed an immense quantity of game; the last two days we killed 245 and 296 pheasants, 322 and 431 head." At Holkham (1822), in one day, 780 head fell to ten guns. At Firle (1829) "Jersey and I shot 376 rabbits, the greatest number that had ever been killed on the hills." [4] Laws against poachers were terribly severe, and thereby game-preservers incurred odium. Twenty years later Lady Clarendon wrote in her *Journal*: "I suspect game will die away. The Duke of Bedford now calls it a feudal luxury unsuited to these times." But the *battue* has survived democracy, as fox-hunting has survived the railway. If Carlyle were alive now he might still be inveighing against a "Joe-Manton Aristocracy," or at any rate against a "Joe-Manton" Plutocracy.

The magnates were formidable persons within their own dominions. "The displeasure of a Peer of England," says Mr Millbank, in *Coningsby*, "used to be a sentence of death." It might certainly be a sentence of eviction. The fourth

Duke of Newcastle, who made himself famous by claiming that "he could do what he liked with his own," after a pre-Reform election turned out thirty-seven tenants for voting against him. At the election of 1837 Lord and Lady Londonderry gave notice that they had asked the Tory candidate to report to them "those who are unmindful and indifferent to our earnest wishes." "What great men," reflects Greville (1830), "are Lord Lonsdale, the Duke of Rutland, and Lord Cleveland! but strip them of their wealth and power, what would they be? Among the most insignificant of mankind; but they all acquire a factitious consideration by the influence they possess to do good and evil, the extension of it over multitudes of dependents." But, on the whole, benevolence prevailed; the quasi-patriarchal duties of a great proprietor were recognized and performed even by the self-regarding. "The Duke of Rutland is as selfish a man as any of his class—that is, he never does what he does not like, and spends his whole life in a round of such pleasures as suit his taste—but he is neither a foolish nor a bad man, and partly from a sense of duty, partly from inclination, he devotes time and labour to the interest and welfare of the people who live and labour on his estate." Greville added that as a Poor Law Guardian this "selfish" Duke visited paupers and invited them to complain to him if they had any grievances. At Panshanger "Lady Cowper and her daughters inspect personally the cottages and condition of the poor. They visit, enquire and give; they distribute flannel, medicines, money." The Duke of Bedford's pensions amounted to £2000 a year. Roebuck the Radical wrote of the rural gentry that they were eminently distinguished "by their sincere desire to fulfil their duties to the poor. They have the wish to do good, though perhaps they may not always possess the requisite knowledge or the requisite means. Their kindness, also, seldom takes an offensive form. It is really a downright honest, active wish to be useful. Of every day many hours are devoted to the performance of neighbourly duties; and by none so willingly, continuously, and earnestly are the

duties performed as by the wives and daughters of the gentry."

But these kindly nobles and gentry formed an exclusive society with its own code of manners and morals. There was a dividing line; as for those on the other side of the line—*Procul o procul este profani!* The distinction between those who were and those who were not gentlemen was a clear one: the professions a gentleman might follow were limited to the Church, the Army, the Navy and the Bar. Their fathers' occupations hung heavily on Addington and Peel. To Creevey Addington was "the accursed apothecary," Peel "the spinning jenny." To Coningsby young Millbank was "an infernal manufacturer." Greville describes Poulett Thomson (afterwards Lord Sydenham) as "originally a merchant and had a quantity of counting-house knowledge," and Cobden as "the Calico-printer"—as if he were thereby beyond the pale. "He is called, I believe, an Ironmaster," said Sir Leicester Dedlock of Mr Rouncewell. Cobden, after a debate in the House of Commons, wrote to his brother (1842): "I find that nothing seems to be so decided a stigma as to brand a man as a mill-owner." Disraeli, in search of a livelihood, discovered that the editorship of a newspaper was not considered a gentlemanlike occupation, and involved a loss of caste, though the editorship of *The Quarterly Review* ranked as quite "respectable." He also averred that at first the Whigs looked askance on Lord John Russell because he was an author. It is possibly forgotten now that Lord John wrote tales, tragedies and histories, and translated Homer. Leslie Grove Jones, "a minor politician," described the members of the Reform Club to Lord Durham as "Stock-Exchange men and the off-scouring of the town." Dignitaries of Oxford and Cambridge, who presented addresses to William the Fourth, were classified by Greville as "academical tag-rag and bobtail."

A gentleman therefore laid claim to a peculiar *status* and a privileged social position; but this he was expected to defend and to vindicate. The duel was still the only accredited method of settling disputes between gentlemen,

and it was especially incumbent on a public man to be ready at any moment to prove his courage on "the field of honour." When Lord Cardigan was tried for fighting Lieutenant Tuckett, Croker wrote to Sir W. Follett enumerating six Prime Ministers who had fought duels—Pulteney, Shelburne, Pitt, Bath, Canning and Wellington. Peel challenged O'Connell in 1815, and went to Ostend to meet him, but O'Connell (it was said) managed to get himself arrested, and the seconds fought instead of the principals. For evading this and other duels O'Connell suffered in reputation. Twenty-one years later Lyndhurst, comparing him as to his seditiousness with Catiline, reserved for Catiline the virtue of courage. It must be said for O'Connell that he refused to "go out" again because he had slain d'Esterre: if so, it all the more behoved him to refrain from violent and insulting language. In 1835, for instance, he called Lord Alvanley "a bloated buffoon," and his son Morgan had to fight for him. Disraeli, in his later years, asserted that Peel often wished to challenge him, but was restrained by Granby and others; he described Peel as a very "fightable" man. In 1832 a duel was with difficulty prevented between Brougham and Canning. In 1826 Lambton and T. W. Beaumont fought on Bamborough Sands, the cause being very trivial. As a Cambridge undergraduate Sir William Molesworth challenged his tutor, Mr Barnard; they were both bound over by the Mayor of Cambridge to keep the peace for twelve months, and Molesworth was expelled from the university. As soon as the period expired Molesworth posted from Munich to meet his opponent at Calais, where they fought on 1st May 1829. Roebuck blamed the Duke of Wellington for meeting Lord Winchilsea (1829), but himself fought John Black, editor of *The Morning Chronicle*. Later in his career, however, when threatened with a challenge, he brought the matter to the notice of the Speaker. Greville criticizes Sir James Graham (1831) for avoiding a duel by an apology to Scarlett, "but nowadays that piece of chivalry is dispensed with." In 1838 Lyndhurst was on the point of

challenging Melbourne. Wilberforce was challenged in 1792 by Captain Rolleston of "The Trade" (a phrase which then signified the Slave Trade), but on religious principle refused to fight.

Mr G. M. Trevelyan writes of Earl Grey's youth: "The men and women among whom he moved when he first came to London lacked both the virtues and vices of the austere. They felt themselves above the censure of any class but their own, and they had not yet been frightened by the French Revolution or reclaimed by the Evangelical movement." In the period between the French Revolution and our Reform Bill the strength of the Evangelical movement, and especially of the Methodists, was on the increase; it made itself felt in the anti-Slavery campaign. Some men of rank became seriously minded. Lord Grantham annoyed Henry Edward Fox (the fourth Lord Holland) by reading prayers to his household—"This cant is to me very disagreeable." Thackeray presents us with some pious aristocrats, such as Lady Walham in *The Newcomes*. Soon after the Bill became an Act we note Mr Tadpole's remark that he would sooner be supported by the Wesleyans "than by all the Marquesses in the peerage." But some time was yet to elapse before middle-class moral standards were to have their full effect. Hard drinking was common to all classes, and eminent persons were often the worse for liquor. George the Fourth made his guests drunk, was himself "beastly drunk" at Lady Salisbury's house, and "dead drunk" on a visit to Ireland. Grey comes in drunk to Brooks's (1810) after dining with the Duke of York. Lord Kenyon and Lord Eldon (1831) get drunk, "not like lords and gentlemen, but like porters." Melbourne is "very drunk" in the House of Lords (1835). Teetotallers were few and far between. "Water, Sir!" exclaimed William the Fourth to Leopold King of the Belgians. "God d——n it! why don't you drink wine?" But if as regards the relation between the sexes the end of the eighteenth century "represented the nadir of morality," and if there was any substratum

of truth in the Prince of Wales's declaration (1788) that there was "not an honest woman in London, excepting Lady Parker and Lady Westmorland," neither was the beginning of the nineteenth remarkable for much severity of conduct. In this matter too there was a freemasonry; toleration of frailty was extended only to those within the charmed circle. Clever Mrs Guy Flouncey (in *Tancred*) discovered "that the fine ladies among whom, from the first, she had determined to place herself, were moral martinets with respect to anyone not born among themselves." The well-born might conform to Lady St Julian's rule—"She knew no crime except a woman not living with her husband; that was past pardon. So long as his presence sanctioned her conduct, however shameless, it did not signify." Or they might walk in the light of Lady Grey's "moral creed," which struck Creevey as being "droll"—"I *like* Lady T——: she is always good-humoured, and she amuses me; and, as she never says anything to offend me or those belonging to me, I don't feel I have anything to do with Mr Thompson or any other of the lovers which she has had. The same with Madame de Dino and the Duchess of B——: they are always very good-humoured and are very agreeable company; and as they never say anything to offend me, I have nothing to do with all the different lovers they are said to have had." There *were* ladies whose conversation *did* offend, and not only by their profanity, which was an eighteenth-century habit ("O, but they did use such very strong language!" records Lady Ritchie of the Misses Berry). "Lady A——," records Henry Edward Fox, "talks so terribly indecently before Mary, Mrs H. B—— very *leste* in her conversation, and told me some of the greatest *équivoques* I ever heard." Of another lady he writes: "Nor does she enjoy any conversation that does not border on veiled indecency." "*Elle parle gras*," writes Lady Campbell to Miss Eden of an officer's wife. But there is no reason to think that such language was generally tolerated in mixed assemblies of men and women. Miss Martineau said of Brougham that in general society "his swearing was so

incessant, and the occasional indecency of his talk so insufferable, that I have seen even coquettes and adorers turn pale, and the lady of the house tell her husband that she could not undergo another dinner-party with Lord Brougham for a guest." A debauched life like Lord Hertford's was universally condemned; it gave his countrymen an ill name. "The Germans," wrote Greville to Reeve, "think our great people are all Lord Hertfords, and our women in their way no better." Peel was criticized for sending a carriage to his funeral, but it is charitable to assume that there was an element of insanity in Hertford's later excesses.

In reading the Lives and Memoirs of persons of this period one is struck by the frequent mention of their illegitimate children. Durham's first wife was Henrietta Cholmondeley, a natural daughter of Lord Cholmondeley. Her mother was a French actress, and the girl was brought up "side by side with his legitimate children." (This was not an uncommon practice.) "She quite outshone Lady Charlotte, her father's daughter born in wedlock," just as Philip Faulconbridge in *King John* outshone his legitimate half-brother. The fifth Duke of Devonshire's second wife, Lady Elizabeth Foster, first became an inmate of Devonshire House through being engaged as governess to his illegitimate daughter, whose mother was Miss Charlotte Spencer. In the very amusing and witty correspondence of Miss Emily Eden we find a letter to her (1822) from Miss Pamela Fitzgerald (afterwards Lady Campbell): "Does it strike you that vices are wonderfully prolific amongst the Whigs? There are such countless illegitimates amongst them, such a tribe of Children of the Mist." The great Whig historians have been silent about this aspect of Whig philoprogenitiveness. But, indeed, lawful families were large enough, and needed no such reinforcements. Matthew Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy*, pictures the British Philistine "presenting himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right." Our British "Barbarians" might have put in an equal claim. Lord Grey had fifteen children. Archbishop Harcourt had sixteen. Lord

Chancellor Cottenham had fifteen. Sir Lancelot Shadwell, the last of the Vice-Chancellors of England, had twelve sons and five daughters. Lord Ernest Hamilton (in *Forty Years On*) has described himself as the youngest of thirteen, and twenty-four years the junior of his eldest sister. His sister, Lady Durham, died at the age of thirty-five, having had thirteen children in seventeen years; his three eldest sisters had thirty-four children between them. One of Trollope's characters in *The Three Clerks* is the Hon. Undecimus Scott, eleventh son of Lord Gaberlunzie. Miss Emily Eden, herself one of fourteen, writes to Mrs Lister: "I think you are apt to increase your family in a dawdling way, not in that rapid manner in which my sister used to produce ten or twelve children all of a sudden, and before one was prepared for the shock." Her sister, Mrs Vansittart, had thirteen or more, and Miss Fitzgerald writes about her: "Your sister Caroline seems an admirable brood mare. I admire her exertions, but, Emmy, it is lucky we are never put to the test; we could never imitate them." Miss Fitzgerald did, however, imitate them, and not unsuccessfully; for she married and became herself the mother of eleven. Of another lady, a Mrs Colville, she writes: "I wanted to show her my boy; she has put so many of them together, she has an experienced eye on the subject." Mrs Colville had seventeen children. One wonders what provision could be made for all these aristocratic offshoots, and for the offshoots of the offshoots, remembering Johnson's gloomy remark about George Granville the poet: "He was, as the biographers observe, the younger son of a younger brother: a denomination by which our ancestors proverbially expressed the lowest state of penury and dependence." [5]

The King of the Belgians, felicitating Queen Victoria upon the birth of the Princess Royal, wished her to be the *Mamma d'une nombreuse famille*. The poor young Queen demurred: "God's will be done, and if He decrees that we are to have a great number of children, why, we must try to bring them up as useful and exemplary members of society." She, too, lived to be an example of that "divine

philoprogenitiveness " of which Matthew Arnold wrote so sarcastically at the expense of Robert Buchanan.

How were these many sons and younger sons educated ? It was not so invariably the custom then as it is now to send them to public schools. Many parents were adverse to the public school system. Grey, an Etonian, sent none of his sons to a public school. Samuel Wilberforce and Tennyson were educated privately or at home till they went to the university ; so were (of a rather later generation) Sir William Harcourt and the eighth Duke of Devonshire. Eton and Harrow were the two pre-eminent schools. In 1830 two Etonians led parties in the Lords, and two Harrovians in the Commons. " An ' Eton reputation,' " says Mr G. M. Trevelyan (in his *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*), " was a long step towards a seat in the House. Grey might or might not have sat for Northumberland at twenty-two if he had never been at Eton, but it is in the highest degree unlikely that the friends and relations of the *bourgeois* Canning and Whitbread would have put those two young gentlemen into the House as soon as they did if Eton had not first proclaimed them as two of her chosen spirits." The training was in the Classics, and the great orators of Greece and Rome were specially studied. It was therefore a training for a House of Commons' career, and a most useful equipment for shining in the House as then constituted. Eton, as being the great school of the ruling classes, was a national institution. Lord Aberdeen, himself a Harrovian, writing to the Queen about the headmastership in 1850, referred to a proper choice as " being of the utmost importance, not only to the school, but to the nation at large."[6] The atmosphere was, as it always has been, democratic. Disraeli had studied it, as he studied everything concerned with the patricians—" the lower boy or fag . . . a little boy, the scion of a noble house." We must, however, contrast with this atmosphere that of some select private schools for young gentlemen. The author of *Collections and Recollections* tells of one at Sunbury-on-Thames where sons of peers had a bench to themselves, and boys whose fathers

succeeded to a peerage "were duly promoted to the privileged bench." Thackeray has described the same sort of snobbery at Dr Birch's Academy at Rodwell Regis, and at the Rev. Otto Rose's Preparatory Academy for young noblemen and gentlemen at Richmond Lodge.

There was therefore in England, at the time the Reform Bill was introduced, a wealthy landed aristocracy of virile and reproductive stock, living splendidly and hospitably both in town and country, with great power in their own provinces, devoted to sport, and giving much time to local administration. They were educated according to their own traditions, and maintained their own standard of manners and morals; in this latter respect they were as yet not very amenable to public opinion. They formed a caste, but not an absolutely exclusive caste, for they were willing to recruit themselves from outside; but the new entrants had to conform to their rules. The great world of 1827, says Disraeli in *Endymion*, "consisted mainly of the great landed aristocracy, who had quite absorbed the nabobs of India, and had nearly appropriated the huge West-Indian fortunes. Occasionally an eminent banker or merchant invested a large part of his accumulations in land and in the purchase of Parliamentary influence, and was in time duly admitted into the sanctuary."

But these people were not only rich, and splendid in their retinues, with social influence and local sway. They were also great in political power; they were the *ruling* class. Their splendour was but the true token of their strength. And their strength lay essentially in this—that they returned a large proportion of Members of Parliament. Disraeli points out how "the sanctuary" could be reached—*i.e.* by first acquiring Parliamentary influence; and this, like land, could be bought. Much land indeed had to be acquired if *great* Parliamentary influence were desired. "Before the Reform Act of 1832," wrote G. W. E. Russell, "it was estimated that 84 patrons of boroughs nominated 137 Members of Parliament, and that 70 others, by virtue

of possession and influence in counties and large towns, returned 150 more." He draws a conclusion which explains the violent opposition to Reform, and which I print in italics because it might be a text for this chapter:

"*This was real power, of which gilt coaches and Blue Ribbons, outriders and 'running footmen,' were only the outward and visible emblems.*"

In 1793 the *Report on the State of Parliamentary Representation*, published by the "Friends of the People," showed that more than 300 out of the 513 representatives for England and Wales were returned by individual "proprietors," who numbered 71 lords and 91 commoners: 88 were absolutely nominated by peers and 72 had their election secured by the influence of peers. In 1827 Croker wrote to Canning that there were 203 seats in the Commons "in the hands of what may be called the Tory aristocracy," while the Whigs had only 73. The House of Lords, it is true, was the lesser of the two Houses in importance, and the less conspicuous stage for the political actor. In 1817 the Duke of Wellington said of Grey: "He is lost by being in the Lords. Nobody cares a d——n for the House of Lords; the House of Commons is everything in England, and the House of Lords nothing." But by their nominees the Lords permeated the Commons. Lord Dudley, in the House of Lords, avowed that the other House was nominated by the great landed proprietors. In a letter to Canning (3rd April 1827) Croker gives a list of these great patrons of both parties. Taking those only who returned five or more Members, on the Tory side were Lord Lonsdale (9), Lord Hertford (8), Duke of Rutland (6), Duke of Newcastle (5), Lord Yarborough (5)[7]; on the Whig side Lord Fitzwilliam (8), Lord Darlington (7), Duke of Devonshire (7), Duke of Norfolk (6), Lord Grosvenor (6). Croker's total for the Tories is 96, and for the Whigs, 54, which bears out what Disraeli wrote in *Coningsby*: "New families had arisen on the Tory side that almost rivalled old Newcastle himself in their electioneering management; and it was evident that, unless some reconstruction of the House of Commons could be effected, the Whig Party could never

obtain a permanent hold of official power." This, he argued, was the reason why the Whigs became Parliamentary Reformers.

So we must realize the enormous importance of Land. Administratively, indeed, the great landowner was a supreme personage. "In the country districts," says Mr J. R. M. Butler, "the administration was identified with the landowning class. The Lord-Lieutenant was alike the chief magistrate, the military commander, and the leading territorial magnate and receiver of rents." Large estates also furnished a sort of claim to a peerage, that fatal lure which led aspirants like General Bulwer (the father of Bulwer Lytton) to borrow at 5 per cent. in order to buy farms yielding 2½ per cent. But the supreme value of land was the borough influence thereto attaching. "Why, a dozen years ago," says Baptist Hatton, in *Sybil*, "I have known men lay out nearly half a million in land and not get 2 per cent. for their money, in order to obtain a borough influence, which might ultimately obtain them a spick and span coronet." And the big landowner made his power felt, not only in the boroughs, but in the counties. Charles Chaplin, uncle of Henry Chaplin and Member for Lincolnshire (1818-1832), "could return no fewer than 7 Members to Parliament, since to vote the way the Squire ordered was the whole duty of the good tenant." Land-acquisition was exactly the method to which the Grenville family for generations doggedly adhered in their pursuit of a dukedom. "Acre was added to acre and estate to estate, often by the dangerous expedient of borrowed money, until Buckinghamshire seemed likely to become the appanage of the family. Borough influence was laboriously accumulated and maintained. Finally, in the reign of George IV. . . . the object was obtained. Lord Liverpool acquired the support of the Grenville Parliamentary influence by an almost commercial compact. Louis XVIII. added his instances, and Buckingham became a Duke. From that moment the star of the family visibly paled. Eight years afterwards the Duke had to shut up Stowe, and go abroad." [8]

Boroughs that were called "close" belonged to certain proprietors; "rotten" boroughs might be purchased by anyone. The process of election for a "close" borough was often a very simple business. When Brougham was returned for Knaresborough in 1830 "there were no resident voters, but the Duke of Devonshire's tenants, some 40 in number, rode into the town, took from his attorney the deeds which made them electors by burgage tenure, chose the ducal candidate, came back to the attorney and surrendered the deeds." The average price of a "rotten" borough in 1830, with secure tenure for the whole life of a Parliament, was £6000. (In 1734 the price had been £2000.) Where there was a contest, whether in borough or county, election expenses and bribes might mount to an appalling figure. The Yorkshire election of 1807 cost Lords Lascelles and Milton £200,000; Wilberforce got off with £30,000. A Yorkshire contest has been described as "hardly less expensive than a small medieval war"; an *uncontested* seat for Yorkshire cost Marshall more than £30,000. In 1816 Creevey writes with *Schadenfreude* of Lord Lonsdale's [9] Westmorland election: "He is now bleeding at every pore—all the houses open—all the agents running up bills—all the manors shot over by anybody who pleases." The Northumberland election of 1826 cost T. W. Beaumont £80,000, and Grey paid £14,000 for his son's expenses. In 1830 a barrister spent £20,000 on Gloucester, and about the same time Evans paid £30,000 to become M.P. for Leicester. After the death of Huskisson, Dennison and Ewart each spent £40,000 on Liverpool. We need not find it hard to believe Mr J. R. M. Butler (from whose work, *The Passing of the Great Reform Bill*, most of these instances have been taken) when he states that "there are estates in England which to this day (1914) suffer from the enormous burdens incurred by the elections of those unblushing times." But we may be sure that where the purchase-money was so high the things purchased were worth the price; those things were Power and Office and Patronage.

It was a stock argument of the anti-Reformers that this system (called, by its attackers, "Old Corruption") gave a chance to men of more youth, wit, talent and genius than of position and fortune. Pitt began his Parliamentary career as Member for Appleby, Fox for Midhurst, Burke for Wendover. Brougham sat for Camelford (Duke of Bedford), Winchelsea (Lord Darlington) and Knaresborough (Duke of Devonshire) before he was invited to stand for Yorkshire. But Old Corruption introduced to the House others besides the Foxes and Pitts and Cannings and Burkes and Sheridans; there were also the law-givers, sketched by Sydney Smith in his *Speech to the Freeholders on Reform*—"The eldest son of my Lord is just come from Eton," "then Vellum, the steward, is put in," "a neighbouring country gentleman, Mr Plumpkin, hunts with my Lord," "a distant relation of the same name, in the county militia," "a barrister, who has written an article in *The Quarterly*." "These five people," says the indignant writer of this tract, "in whose nomination I have no more agency than I have in the nomination of the toll-keepers of the Bosphorus, are to make laws for me and my family—to put their hands in my purse, and to sway the future destinies of this country."

Let us note *en passant*, though I do not remember this argument being used in the great debates, that the "close" borough sometimes provided a restful retreat for eminent politicians who wished for an easier life, or who had been rejected by their old constituents. Wilberforce was glad to exchange the burden of his Yorkshire constituency for Lord Calthorpe's borough of Bramber in Sussex. Peel, when rejected by Oxford University, took refuge in Westbury—and was once asked by Lord Howick if this seat were not regularly purchased from Sir Manasseh Lopes.[10]

As a rule the patron expected obedience from his nominees, who, at the beginning of the session, came up to Westminster not always certain which way to vote. Few borough owners were as generous as Lord Lansdowne, who put Macaulay in for Calne without asking him for any pledges. Yet he described himself as "wearing the badge, though not feeling

the chain of servitude." Some proprietors were simply capricious: Palmerston, when very young, was given the seat of Newtown, in the Isle of Wight, "on condition that he never set foot in the place, the patron being jealous of any interference with the faithful burgesses." A great man who controlled half-a-dozen votes was usually a disciplinarian; he looked on his little cohort as his instrument for gaining office or a step in the peerage. This expectation of obedience lasted long after the passing of the Reform Bill. In 1846 Newcastle dismissed Gladstone from Newark for supporting Peel; in 1860 Lord Robert Cecil impliedly acknowledged that he was accountable to Lord Exeter, to whom he owed his seat at Stamford, for his vote in the House of Commons. Creevey is our authority for the rules of the relationship in his day: "There was no principle I held more sacred than that, when one gentleman held a gratuitous seat in Parliament from another, and any difference arose in their politicks, the former was bound in honour to surrender it." Another rule was that if the patron died, and his successor called on the Member of Parliament to resign his seat, the latter was bound to comply. Meanwhile the loyal service was in abeyance—"The death of poor Thanet makes a great difference in my feelings as to Parliamentary attendance. It was due to *him* to be at my post; I feel no such obligation to the present Earl or my dear constituents."

The *status* of the Member in reference to his patron was therefore not peculiarly dignified; we can almost envisage him riding to London behind the great man and at a respectful distance, with a couple of his little group or faction on either side of him. But this did not in the least detract from his dignity when he took his seat in the House. "No man can be of consequence," said Lord Chesterfield, "who is not in Parliament." The converse was also true: no man could be a Member of Parliament without being of consequence. Creevey records in his *Reminiscences*: "I became a Member of the House of Commons in 1802, and the moment a man became such, then, if he attached himself to one of the great parties in the House—Whigs or Tories—he became at once

a publick man, and had a position in society which nothing else could give him." Greville writes of Gully, ex-prize fighter: "His position is now more anomalous than ever, for a Member of Parliament is a great man," though Gully had become so by "the suffrages of the blackguards of Pontefract." Gladstone cited with approval an exclamation of Roebuck's made in the House: "We, Sir, are or ought to be the *élite* of the people of England for mind: we are at the head of the mind of the people of England." At the time of the Reform Bill, says Mr J. R. M. Butler, the House of Commons "was still the centre of the nation's political life in a sense unreal to later generations. August as the Roman Senate, it could claim no small share in repelling an invader more fearful than Hannibal himself." "As courageous, as fastidous," was Roebuck's praise, and it is very debatable whether a more numerous constituency enhanced those qualities of fastidiousness and courage. After the Bill was passed the House was different; even the Parliament that passed the Bill was different. Strong popular excitement already had the effect of loosening the old bonds. In 1831 a Parliament was returned which "was not amenable to the House of Lords." At this election even Newark rebelled against Newcastle.

The Church of England in 1832 was not only aristocratic but Tory-aristocratic, for the very sufficient reason that during the last sixty years the Whigs had been almost continuously out of office. Those "villains of the Church," as Creevey described the Bishops, had voted against Queen Caroline, and one-and-twenty of them swelled the House of Lords' majority that rejected the Reform Bill in 1831. "They won't vote on many more Bills!" ejaculated Brougham. Clergy and Bishops were thereupon denounced as "black slugs," "black dragoons" and "black recruiting-sergeants." "Judas Iscariot, Bishop of Worcester," was chalked up on the Cathedral walls of the City. At Bristol the Bishop's palace was burnt. Between Queen Caroline's trial and the Reform Bill the Church had sustained two serious defeats

in the repeal of the Test Acts and the passing of Catholic Emancipation, which doubtless made bishops and clergy still more bitter against Reform; for Reform obviously opened the door to every kind of attack—even to Disestablishment and Disendowment. Gladstone, a high-minded Churchman, opposed the Bill on spiritual grounds —"There was in my eyes a certain element of anti-Christ in the Reform Act"; but the dignitaries of the Church, it must be admitted, had strong material motives for retaining the *status quo*. The curate who did duty for an absentee incumbent had a hard life and was poorly paid; with more than one cure he had to become what was known as a "galloping parson," in order to cope with his various services. But an Archbishop was as great a *magnifico* as a Duke. "I dined yesterday," writes Greville (1st June 1838), "at Lambeth, at the Archbishop's public dinner, the handsomest entertainment I ever saw. There were nearly a hundred people present, all full-dressed or in uniform. Nothing can be more dignified and splendid than the whole arrangement, and the dinner was well served and very good." Of this Archbishop (Howley) G. W. E. Russell tells, in his *Collections and Recollections*, that he was "preceded by servants bearing flambeaux when he walked across from Lambeth Chapel to what were called 'Mrs Howley's Lodgings.'" When writing to him it was customary to use gilt-edged notepaper. Of Harcourt, Archbishop of York, who died in 1847 at the age of ninety, Greville says: "It would be difficult to find a greater example of uninterrupted prosperity. . . . He was the most prosperous of men, full of professional dignities and emoluments, and the inheritor of a large private fortune; he was the father of a numerous family, whom he saw flourishing around him in opulence and worldly success; he lived in the exercise of a magnificent hospitality, and surrounded with social enjoyments." This Archbishop (G. W. E. Russell is our authority) "never went from Bishopthorpe to York Minster except attended by his Chaplains, in a coach-and-six, while Lady Anne was made to follow in a pair-horse carriage, to show her that her posi-

tion was not the same thing among women as her husband's was among men." The Bishop of Durham enjoyed a revenue of £40,000 a year ; the Commission of Assize ran in his name as Prince Palatine. Some incumbents, too, were well provided. Lord Granville, in his *Reminiscences*, mentions the Reverend Mr Peyton, Rector of Long Stanton, a living worth £14,000 a year. When the Whigs " came in," Sydney Smith, though his political services gave him a good claim to a bishopric, was content with a Residentiary Canonry of St Paul's—" a snug thing, let me tell you, being worth full £2000 a year." [11] True indeed was Bishop Warburton's claim in the previous century that " now the profession of the Christian faith is attended with ease and honour."

Francis Place wrote, in 1831, of " a luxurious, rich, overbearing, benumbing clergy," but towards the close of Liverpool's administration there was an improvement in the character of the Episcopal bench. The Bishops could no longer be described as " the needy scions of a factitious aristocracy," nor bishoprics as " appanages for the younger sons of great families." If we may believe Disraeli, Liverpool adopted the policy of appointing scholars—" His test of priestly celebrity was the decent editorship of a Greek play. He sought for the successors of the apostles, for the stewards of the mysteries of Sinai and of Calvary, among third-rate hunters after syllables." Sydney Smith derides the promotion of " a man who has given up all his thoughts to the Frogs of Aristophanes and the Targum of Onkelos." But these divines, though respectable, were undistinguished and ineffective. The events of the winter of 1831-1832 proved that there was some truth in the conclusion of Disraeli's invective—" If they were ever heard of, it was that they had been pelted in a riot." In popular estimation the Bishops were identified with the ruling, repressive, coercive, aristocratic and privileged class. " How could any Government go on without the support of the Church and the land ? " asks Zenobia, in *Endymion* ; " it is quite unnatural." Sometimes the parson appeared to be more selfish than the landlord. In the distress of the winter of 1830 Mrs Bulwer wrote

that the Norfolk clergy would not abate their tithe, though the landlords had lowered their rent.

A great Aristocracy ruled England, an Aristocracy which itself severely felt the effects of a long war, some of its members with difficulty keeping up the outward show of wealth, living on their capital by mortgaging their estates, and occasionally obliged to beat a strategic retreat to Boulogne, but most of them faring sumptuously and levying much toll on the public purse, and too often affecting an Olympian detachment from their poorer fellow-countrymen,

"Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe."

The reader is well aware of the obverse side of the medal. The common folk suffered severely. Greville, whom I have quoted so many times as the chronicler of fashion and luxury, had opportunities at the Privy Council office of seeing that other side: "The reports from Sunderland (1831) exhibit a state of human misery, and necessarily of moral degradation, such as I hardly ever heard of, and it is no wonder, when a great part of the community is plunged into such a condition . . . that there should be so many who are ripe for any desperate scheme of revolution. At Sunderland they say there are houses with 150 inmates, who are huddled five and six in a bed." Of the Hibner trial (1829): "These wretched beings were described to be in the lowest state of moral and physical degeneration, with scarcely rags to cover them, food barely sufficient to keep them alive, and working eighteen or nineteen hours a day, without being permitted any relaxation, or even the privilege of going to church on Sunday. . . . The contrasts are too striking, and such an unnatural, artificial, and unjust state of things neither can nor ought to be permanent. I am convinced that before many years elapse these things will produce some great convulsion." Of the victims of cholera at Rotherhithe (1832): "They are in the most abject state of poverty, without beds to lie upon. . . . They are huddled and crowded together by families in the same room . . .

not as permanent lodgers, but procuring a temporary shelter." And yet Ashley's Ten Hours Bill was too much for this humane Greville: "We are just now (March 1844) overrun with philanthropy, and God knows where it will stop, or whither it will lead us." Ashley was censured by Lord John Russell for showing "an overstrained zeal for the interests of humanity."

As to rural labourers, Cobden (1839) pointed out that the wages of Devonshire labourers were from seven to nine shillings a week. "They seldom saw meat or tasted milk; their chief food was a compost of ground barley and potatoes." In one Dorsetshire village thirty-six persons, on an average, dwelt in every house. There was in those days an economic doctrine, well received in some quarters, that wages were naturally fixed at "subsistence level." It may be doubted whether the employers of the agricultural worker quite realized even this moderate ideal. Of the winter of 1830 Mr G. M. Trevelyan writes: "Noble lords coming up to town from their estates report that labourers have been found lying four together under the hedges, dead of starvation."

But for the miseries of the poor at this period, both in the towns and in the country, it is unnecessary to do more than refer the reader to Mr and Mrs Hammond's fully documented treatises, founded on research in our public offices, *The Village Labourer*, *The Town Labourer*, and *The Skilled Labourer*.

In 1816 a Radical placard thus described "the present state of Great Britain": "Four millions of people on the point of starvation, four millions with a bare subsistence, one-and-a-half million in straitened circumstances, one half million in dazzling luxury." It may be that this picture was highly coloured both as to the "dazzling luxury" of the half-million and the starvation-point of the four millions, but it fairly reflected the indignation of the sufferers at a terrible contrast. It was this dire inequality of fortune that gave impetus to the Reform movement. The system of Privilege and of Aristocracy became hateful as a system of oppression, and was believed to be responsible for all this widespread want and misery. Our own Great War has made the rich

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deferential to the poor, whether it be the deference of fear or of sympathy. During the Great War of our ancestors (which lasted five times as long as ours) repressive measures had to be put in force—as, indeed, we too had to put them in force—in order to safeguard the country. But after *their* war there was no insincere talk of "houses fit for heroes"; those repressive measures were continued, and thus the Toryism of that time degenerated into hardness and harshness. It may be that the pure Tory wine had already become adulterated by the Court Toryism or "King's Friends'" Toryism which triumphed in 1770, and by the later infusion of Portland Whiggism in 1794; but the policy of repression, enforced during and after the war, was the principal cause of Tory deterioration. Such was the Toryism of the Old Guard of Beaufort and Rutland, of Eldon and Wetherell; such was the Toryism that inspired the Duke of Wellington's fatal *non possumus* speech of 2nd November 1830, in which he rejected the very idea of Reform. "Our rulers regarded themselves," says Mr Maurice Woods, in his *History of the Tory Party*, "as a small band of hard-bitten officers commanding a regiment of heroic blackguards." "After all," asked a Tory lady, "what did it signify what the people thought or what they expressed if the army were to be depended upon?" It came to be believed that the mass of the people were, and must be, in chronic opposition to government, and that there must be a perpetual recourse to severity and even to martial law. One of Dickens's aristocrats (in *Little Dorrit*) thought that "if Augustus Stiltstalking had in a general way ordered the cavalry out with instructions to charge, the country would have been preserved." It was left to the genius of Disraeli, and to his indomitable patience and courage, to restore the true principles of the Tory party and make them truly national, so that Toryism could again become representative of every class in the country.

But the old system was now to come to an end. On 7th June 1832, in Disraeli's words, "Dukism, that was supposed to be eternal, suddenly crashed."

NOTES

[1] The Princess of Wales, Mother of George III., called the Duke of her day "The Prince of the Whigs."

[2] Lady Gwendolen Cecil's *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury*, vol. i., p. 3.

[3] See *The Eighth Duke of Beaufort and the Badminton Hunt.*

[4] In the year 1828 Croker chronicles a more modest bag of six hares and a pheasant; the guns were himself and Lord Lowther, the "shoot" was Regent's Park.

[5] Of Lord Grey's numerous sons one succeeded him, two became admirals, one a general, one a clergyman; but a Prime Minister has opportunities of advancing young men in their professions.

[6] An old Etonian, who died recently, wrote in his Autobiography: "As is the attitude of the average Englishman to someone who is not an Englishman, so is the attitude of all Etonians to someone who is not an Etonian" (*The Passing Years*, Lord Willoughly de Broke).

[7] He omits the Duke of Buckingham, who was believed to command six Members.

[8] *Chatham* (Lord Rosebery), pp. 140-141. The Marquis of Cleveland was said to have been created Duke of Cleveland as a reward for having *sacrificed* his boroughs.

[9] His predecessor was thus referred to in *The Rolliad*:

> "E'en by the elements his power confess'd
> Of mines and Boroughs Lonsdale stands posses'd,
> And one sad servitude alike denotes
> The slave that labours and the slave that votes."

[10] Peel first sat (1809) for an Irish borough. "His father bought him the seat of Cashel, in Tipperary, as one might buy a uniform or a hunter" (*Private Letters of Sir Robert Peel* (The Hon. A. G. V. Peel), p. 13).

[11] He owed his first promotion to the Tory chancellor, Lyndhurst, who gave him, in 1828, a Prebendal Stall in Bristol Cathedral. (One of Lord Chancellor Jeffreys' few generous deeds is said to have been the gift of a Canonry in the same Cathedral to a "protesting" clergyman of Taunton.)

II

THE REVOLUTION OF 1832

Macaulay the Partisan—The Whigs & the Close Boroughs—Place-Hunters—"No Compensation" for Boroughs—The Story of Ferrars who lost his Seat—Fears of a Revolution—A *Jacquerie*—Dismal Prophets—The Reformed House meets—Reformer M.P.'s—The Parliament improves—The Last Pigtail—The New Constituents—Attack on the Church—Municipal Reform—"Delegate" M.P.'s—Gain & Loss by Reform—Post-Reform Apprehensions—Reform & Democracy—Was there a Subversive Element in the Reform Bill Agitation?—Disraeli & Secret Societies—The Middle Class enters into Power

"BUT you might have heard a pin drop as Duncannon read the numbers. Then again the shouts broke out, and many of us shed tears. I could scarcely refrain. And the jaw of Peel fell; and the face of Twiss was as the face of a damned soul; and Herries looked like Judas taking his necktie off for the last operation." So wrote Macaulay to Ellis of the division of 22nd March 1831, when the Second Reading of the Reform Bill was carried by a majority of one; but it was not till 7th June of the following year that the Bill, twice altered, became law. The last scene in the House of Lords, when it received the Royal Assent, was in utter contrast with that described by Macaulay. In Samuel Reynolds's painting the Government benches are full, the Tory benches are empty; almost alone on the left of the Throne stands the Duke of Sussex, the Whig son of George the Third. One has an impression of the calm and gloom that are appropriate to "The Tapestry." Between these two dates the hopes and fears of the Bill's champions and opposers had risen and fallen. In the country there had been terrible riots, in London incessant intrigue; but the Zenobias of Mayfair had exerted themselves in vain. The King had wavered;

Earl Grey had resigned; the Duke had been obliged to advise his recall. During eleven fateful days of May 1832 England had been on the brink of revolution.

Macaulay, in likening one Tory to a devil and another to Judas, gives proof—if proof were needed—of the violent political passions of the day and of how ardently he himself entertained them. Party feeling poisoned even his kindly temperament, and (what was less excusable) his literary criticism. Not content with hating Croker as a political opponent, he virulently attacked him as a man of letters. It was in September 1831, in the very height of the Reform struggle, that his criticism of Croker's *Boswell* appeared in *The Edinburgh Review*: "A dog of the House of Montague moves me. . . , I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's." But Macaulay did not exaggerate the consternation in the Tory ranks. And yet, perhaps, it is necessary for us to call to mind what the Tories stood to lose, in order fully to understand, and indeed to sympathize with, their apprehensions.

First of all, if we may put the lowest motive in the forefront, the Tories had to face great pecuniary losses. Sixty boroughs in Schedule A of the Bill were to lose two members, forty-seven in Schedule B to lose one. In all one hundred and sixty-seven seats were to be wiped out, by far the greater number of which belonged to the Tories. Now these boroughs had either been inherited by their proprietors, or had been acquired for substantial consideration—none the less substantial that the purchase had been inclusive of neighbouring acres. The tenure of one of them for the whole life of a Parliament might have been sold for as much as £6000. They were, in fact, of the nature of family investments, of which the income and profit and advantage might be enjoyed by the investor himself or his son or his brother, or transferred to some other person for value received. No doubt this seems to us now, as it did then to reforming Whigs, and to Radicals whom the system excluded, a very wicked and corrupt state of things; but it existed, and had existed for probably two hundred years. Between the close of the reign of James the First and

1832, Durham and Newark were the only two boroughs which were created in either England or Wales; otherwise the representation of Great Britain had not altered since the Union with Scotland, except that Grampound's two members had been transferred to Yorkshire in 1821. The corruption of electors had been practised at least as early as the reign of William the Third. The Whig historians dilate on this abuse with horrified rectitude; they are painfully shocked at the infamy of such transactions. But the Whigs had been as deep in borough-mongering as the Tories, only it would seem that latterly the Tories had monopolized most of the seats. Disraeli was not fair in ascribing the Whig ardour for Reform *wholly* to this cause, but it certainly was one of the causes. The Whigs, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, may be compared to a firm of brewers who realize that a rival firm has bought up the freeholds, or the reversion of the freeholds, of all the remaining public-houses in their district; or to High Church clergymen who note with alarm that an Evangelical Corporation is purchasing advowsons on a large scale.

The custom of borough-mongering is, indeed, scarcely reputable enough to be protected by Burke's doctrine of *mos majorum*, but it *was* a *mos majorum*. So, for that matter, was place-hunting, or sinecure-hunting—a thing even less creditable than borough-mongering or vote-buying, because the salary for the sinecure was paid out of the public purse. When, in 1830, the Whigs at last "came in," and Creevey was made Treasurer of the Ordnance, with a residence in the Tower of London, his delight in his new quarters was childlike:

> "Here's the bower, the darling Tower,
> The Tower that Rufus planted;
> Dear Norman King! 'twas just the thing—
> The thing that Creevey wanted."

"I'll tell you one project I wish my Tower to carry into execution for me. I have set my heart upon our all going to the Menai Bridge in the autumn. My allowance for going to Ireland gives me one pair of horses, and my place will easily

give the leaders. So think of it, ladies, and gratify me by saying it shall be done, and it shall be called 'The Treat of the Tower.'" Now Creevey never pretended to great elevation of character, but what are we to think of Macaulay himself, in 1845, writing to his sister in a similar strain of joyous exultation upon the prospect of receiving the Pay Office from Lord John Russell? "I shall have £2000 a year for the trouble of signing my name." As for the History, "I shall get on nearly as fast as when I was in opposition." Only a master of Macaulay's own style could fitly denounce the scandal of receiving so large a payment for so small a service.

So we need not feel ashamed of bestowing a little pity on those Tories (and also those Whigs) whose boroughs were taken from them—and taken without any compensation. "The Reform Bill," writes Mr G. M. Trevelyan,[1] "in the eyes of the sufferers was first and foremost a confiscation of private property and of corporate and customary rights, as extensive as that which accompanied the destruction of the medieval Church by the Tudors, and of the Monarchy by the victorious Roundheads." Mr Trevelyan reminds us that compensation had been an element in the Reform schemes of Wyvill and of Pitt, and—as late as 1823—of Lord John Russell. "Nomination boroughs," said Lord John, "had, by custom, become a recognized species of property." But later opinion hardened against any compensation being given. Soon after the Bill was introduced, Sydney Smith, speaking at Taunton, exclaimed against certain persons who were "wild enough to talk of compensation." He protested that the expropriated owners of boroughs had no more right to expect to be compensated than the highwaymen who had infested Finchley Common and who had lost their employment when the Common was enclosed. Later in his life Sydney Smith became very much disillusioned with the Reformers whom his wit and eloquence had helped to put in office; but for the present the doctrine of non-compensation was to prevail. An auctioneer, who sold the borough of Gatton, described such a property as "the only infallible source of fortune, titles and honours in this happy country."

This source of fortune was now to be dried up, and it was a poor consolation for the immediate sufferers that at long last Manchester with a population of 182,000, Birmingham with 146,000, and Leeds with 123,000, were to be enfranchised.[2]

But the old boroughs also had been a source of "honours." How many careers, painfully and laboriously pursued, came to an abrupt and ruinous end on 7th June 1832! In *Endymion* Disraeli has vividly described one of these tragedies. William Ferrars, after a youth of brilliant promise and a successful university course, has, through his father's interest, been provided with a close borough, and has made a good figure in the House of Commons. In Liverpool's ministry he has been a Lord of the Treasury and Under-Secretary of State; on Liverpool's death he has "cast in his lot with the great destiny of the Duke of Wellington." On the death of Canning he has been promoted Privy Councillor and given "high office on the verge of the Cabinet," but has gone out of office with the Tories in the autumn of 1830. In the terrible days of May 1832, when the King sent for the Duke, but the Duke could not secure Peel, the dauntless Zenobia tells Ferrars that he is to be offered the lead of the House of Commons; Ferrars braces himself to accept the offer. The Duke sends for him, but only to inform him that he has been obliged to relinquish the King's commission. Ferrars is in despair, for his affairs are deeply embarrassed and his borough is to be disfranchised. For a time he retires to the country; but in 1834 William the Fourth dismisses Melbourne, and Peel is summoned from Rome. Ferrars, with hope renewed, comes up from the country to see if a seat is procurable. In his club he hears a young M.P. remark that "anything that happened before the election of 1832 I look upon as an old almanack." Alas! poor Ferrars is to discover the truth of this comparison:

"The man with every claim called on Barron on the morrow, and saw his secret list, and listened to all his secret prospects and secret plans. There was more than one manufacturing town where there was an opening;

decided reaction, and a genuine Conservative feeling. Barron had no doubt that, although a man might not get in the first time he stood, he would ultimately. Ultimately was not a word which suited Mr Ferrars. There were several old boroughs where the freemen still outnumbered the ten-pounders and where the prospects were more encouraging; but the expense was equal to the goodness of the chance, and although Ferrars had every claim, and would no doubt be assisted, still one could not shut one's eyes to the fact that the personal expenditure must be considerable. The agricultural boroughs must be fought, at least this time, by local men. Something might be done with an Irish borough; expense comparatively speaking inconsiderable, but the politics deeply Orange.

"Gloom settled on the countenance of this spoiled child of politics, who had always sate for a close borough, and who recoiled from a contest like a woman, when he pictured to himself the struggle and exertion and personal suffering he would have to encounter and endure, and then with no certainty of success. The trained statesman who had anticipated the mass of his party on Catholic Emancipation to become an Orange Candidate! It was worse than making speeches to ten-pounders and canvassing freemen!

"'I knew things were difficult,' said Ferrars, 'but I was in hopes that there were yet some seats that we might command.'

"'No doubt there are,' said Mr Barron; 'but they are few, and they are occupied—at least at present.'"[3]

Such was the desolating effect of the new *régime* upon the men of the old, especially upon those whose political existence had hung upon a patron with a borough. These poor wretches were now left drifting like rudderless wrecks upon an uncharted sea.

Thus it was the Tories fought against Reform, firstly for selfish and personal reasons, because it affected their fortunes and careers; and yet this latter fear—the fear of the loss of an honourable career—was by no means an ignoble motive. But there was another thing they feared,

which no man may blame them for fearing, and that was Revolution,

"The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss"

which they believed to be yawning in front of them. It was the unknown future that they apprehended, of an England with a new kind of government that would represent forces incalculable and immeasurable. They feared, in fact, the destruction of Monarchy, House of Lords, and Church, and all the ancient preservative institutions of the country.

These fears of some terrible cataclysm had been felt long before Reform had come within the range of practical politics. In 1809 (we read in Creevey) "Charles Warren the lawyer predicts the present reign will end quietly from the popularity of the King, but that when it ends, the profligacy and unpopularity of the Princes with the situation of the country as to financial difficulties, and the rapidly and widely extended growth of Methodism, will produce a storm." In 1812 Creevey himself writes: "The more one sees of the conduct of this most singular man [the Prince Regent], the more one becomes convinced he is doomed, from his personal character, to shake his throne." Greville, as we have seen, was moved by the condition of the poor in Sunderland and Rotherhithe, and by revelations made at an Old Bailey trial, to the gloomiest prognostications. And we may take it as certain that since the French Revolution, which (according to Burke) had affected one-fifth of the population with subversive ideas, vague apprehensions had been endemic. These fears now centred round the Reform agitation. Some were alarmed at the prospect, if the Bill should pass; some, if it should be rejected. Macaulay claimed "that the question, whether the change in itself be good or bad, has become a question of secondary importance; that, good or bad, the thing must be done; that a law as strong as the laws of attraction and motion has decreed it" (House of Commons, 10th November 1831). Whether the Bill were passed or rejected, it seemed as if terrible results were to be expected.

In the great towns the "Mob"—the unknown or little-known *residuum* of the population—had always been a formidable monster. In London it had shown its power in the Sacheverell riots and the Wilkes riots; at the Gordon Riots it had poured out of its fastnesses—the Minories, the Dials, the Mint, and the purlieus of the Fleet—and for a time held the City at its mercy. But these riots had been urban, and had been occasioned by political and religious rather than by social grievances; there had been no real *jacquerie* in England since the Peasants' Revolt of 1377. In the winter of 1830-1831 many counties in England did experience something very like a *jacquerie*. "This part of the country," wrote Mrs Edward Bulwer (on 5th December 1830), from Heydon in Norfolk, "like every other, has been in a terrible state of disturbance. Meetings of five or six hundred desperadoes in every village. About ten days ago there was a meeting of this sort at a place called Reepham, which all the noblemen and gentlemen in the county went to try and put down, by telling the people that their wrongs should be redressed, their wages raised, and employment given to them. Upon which the mob shouted: 'It is very well to try and talk us over, but we will have blood for our suppers!' They then began pelting the magistrates and gentlemen with large stones. . . . The burnings are dreadful, but every house in this part of the world is in a state of defence, and all the farmers, shopkeepers, servants, etc., etc., sworn in special constables." By the middle of December incendiary fires were burning in thirteen counties, and the Government appointed a special Commission to try the incendiaries.[4] Of the Rotundanists, so called from their place of weekly assembly in Blackfriars Bridge Road, Place himself said: "Among these men were some who were perfectly atrocious, whose purpose was riot, as providing an opportunity for plundering." At Bristol the Bishop's Palace, public buildings and many private houses were burnt to the ground. At Nottingham the Castle and several factories were burnt. In Darlington a lady driving beside Lord Tankerville was nearly killed by a paving stone

that was hurled at her. The house of Mrs Musters in Nottinghamshire was burnt; she had to pass the night out-of-doors in the damp and died of exposure. There was said to exist a scheme to seize the families of certain peers and hold them for hostages.

If, in the light of these actual events, we read the prophecies of certain contemporary persons, most of them eminent, we shall not be surprised at their lugubrious tone. For instance:

Lord Sefton writes to Creevey, October 1830: "I don't believe there will be a King in Europe in two years' time, or that property of any kind is worth five years' purchase."

"Hardinge told me he was convinced that a revolution in this country was inevitable, and such is the opinion of others who support this Bill, not because they think concession will avert it, but will let it come more gradually and with less violence" (Greville's *Journal*, 11th August 1831).

J. W. Croker: "The day which reforms the House of Commons dissolves the House of Lords and overturns the Church." Then might ensue "a military despotism, another martyrdom at Whitehall, or another flight from Faversham." "I myself am satisfied that it would end in a Republic, and after an agony more or less prolonged would revert to another Restoration." "No King, no Lords, no inequalities in the social system; all would be levelled to the plane of the petty shopkeepers and small farmers; this, perhaps, not without bloodshed, but certainly by confiscations and persecutions." The Duke of Wellington sees "nothing but revolution" in the Reform Bill. The revolution will be accomplished "without violence or bloodshed, unless, indeed, there happened to be one or two assassinations, as of himself or Peel, which he thinks not improbable." [5]

Lord Dudley: "The country was on the eve of becoming a Republic" (from his last speech in the House of Lords, 5th October 1831).

Lord Eldon: "If the Bill passes, the Monarchy and the Peers of the realm will not, as such, survive me long."

Sir R. Inglis (in the House of Commons, on the introduction of the Bill by Lord John Russell): "No instance, Sir, I am sure, can be pointed out, where a popular representation aided by a free Press on the one hand, can be found in juxtaposition with a Monarchy. . . . If this measure be carried, it will sweep the House of Lords clean in the course of ten years."

Tennyson: "Reform . . . will bring on the confiscation of Church property, and may be the downfall of the Church altogether." (The Tennyson family, however, rang the Church bells when the Bill was passed.)

Lady Marney, therefore, in *Sybil*, was only reflecting in exaggerated form the opinions of her day when she "announced to Egremont that a revolution was inevitable, that all property would be instantly confiscated, the poor deluded King led to the block or sent over to Hanover at the best, and the whole of the nobility and principal gentry, and everyone who possessed anything, guillotined without remorse."

Men with "a stake in the country," and not those of Tory opinions only, were suffering from terrible apprehensions:

> "Truly the hearts of men are full of fear;
> You cannot reason almost with a man
> That looks not heavily and full of dread."

It was this nervousness that really decided the issue. The promise of King William to create the necessary peers, on which so much has been written, and which Brougham appears to have utilized with characteristic unscrupulousness, only proved that the King shared the panic. There was once a man who became a Roman Catholic because (he said) the Church of Rome damns all of other Churches, while some other Churches do not close the door of salvation to Roman Catholics. On the same principle many of our ancestors, while convinced that revolution must follow the rejection of the Bill, thought it might be avoided, or at least postponed, if the Bill were passed. So, in the

end, only twenty-two peers voted against the Third Reading, and the Bill became Law.

The Reformed House met in February 1833, and we may imagine the survivors from previous Parliaments, and other curious persons, examining the new arrivals with much the same half-contemptuous interest as the courtiers of Versailles bestowed on the members of the States-General in 1789. In the elections the Tories, as might have been expected, had been smitten hip and thigh. Sir Herbert Maxwell, in editing the Creevey Papers, gives 149 Tories against 509 Whigs and Liberals. In Morley's *Life of Gladstone* the numbers are estimated as: Tories, 144; Reformers, 395; English and Scottish Radicals, 76; Irish Repealers, 43. A quite different reckoning is made by Mr and Mrs Hammond (*Lord Shaftesbury*, p. 23), who say that the House "contained only 172 Conservatives; Liberals, Radicals and Irishmen, including five members of the O'Connell family, making up the majority of 486." Mr J. A. R. Marriott quotes a computation which gives the Tories 167, the Whigs, Liberals and Radicals 453, and the Irish Repealers 38. Mr A. G. V. Peel (*Private Letters of Sir Robert Peel*, p. 148) says that in 1833 the number of Tory members was 150, which was increased to 250 by the election of 1835, and to 320 in 1837. Taking them at the most favourable estimate, the Tories were in a hopeless minority, and Peel was content to watch events, "playing a deep waiting game of scrutiny and observation."

Irish votes had helped materially to pass the Bill, and no doubt the Repealers expected much from the Whigs, by whom they were not loved. They were very vocal in Parliament, and were known as "The Irish Brigade," "The Irish Band," "The Pope's Brass Band." Irish votes, said Lord Morley in his *Life of Cobden*, were necessary to every Whig ministry since the Reform Bill.

As a whole, the *personnel* of the House was not so low as some Tories had foretold. "My honourable friend, the Member for Thetford [Mr Alexander Baring], tells us," said Macaulay in the House of Commons (30th September

1831), " that none but mob orators, men who are willing to pay the basest court to the multitude, will have any chance. Other speakers have gone still further, and have described to us the future borough members as so many Marats and Santerres, low, fierce, desperate men, who will turn the House into a bear-garden, and will turn the monarchy into a republic, mere agitators, without honour, without sense, without education, without the feelings or manners of gentlemen." Such were the prophecies. And here is the reality, according to Greville's *Journal* of 22nd February 1833 : " The first thing that strikes one is its inferiority in point of composition to preceding Houses of Commons, and the presumption, impertinence, and self-sufficiency of the new members. Formerly new members appeared with some modesty and diffidence, and with some appearance of respect for the assembly into which they were admitted ; these fellows behave as if they had taken it by storm, and might riot in all the insolence of victory. There exists no *party* but that of the government ; the Irish act in a body under O'Connell to the number of about forty ; the Radicals are scattered up and down without a leader, numerous, restless, turbulent and bold." At the end of the session Greville qualifies this verdict : " The House appeared at first to be very unruly, not under the command of Government, talkative, noisy, ill-constituted for the transaction of business. After a little while it got better in this respect, the majority, however, though evidently determined to support Government, would not be *commanded* by it, . . . but whenever the Ministers seemed to be in danger they always found efficient support." The Government, Greville admitted, had proved successful—"Let the praise rest where it may, whether it be due to the wisdom of men or the result of that disposition to right itself which has always appeared inherent in the British Commonwealth. . . . A Reform Parliament turns out to be very much like every other Parliament except that it is rather differently and somewhat less ably composed than its predecessors." According to Disraeli the improvement was due to the old members—" After a short time it

was observed that the old material, though at first much less in quantity, had leavened the new mass ; that the tone of the former House was imitated and adopted, and that at the end of five years . . . much of its serene, and refined, and even classical character had been recovered." [6] But this " classical " character did not imply an acquaintance with " the classics," for Disraeli himself, on one occasion, after citing a Latin author, added, " Which, for the sake of the successful capitalists around me, I will now try to translate " ; and he also described the post-Reform House as " a select vestry fulfilling municipal rather than imperial functions." In an account of Sir Francis Burdett, which he left amongst his papers, he refers to " one of the early Reform Parliaments, full of retired tradesmen." But it was naturally a pose of the patrician, or would-be patrician, to sneer at men of business. " Finance and commerce," said Lady Montfort to Endymion, " are everybody's subjects, and are most convenient to make speeches about for men who cannot speak French and have had no education." Probably the new members, many of whom were of great ability, irritated the old by outshining them in business knowledge.

As a minor sign of the times it may be mentioned that in this Parliament only one pigtail was to be seen. It belonged to Mr Sheppard, M.P. for Frome.[7] We gather from Disraeli that Sir Francis Burdett (the Sir Fraunceys Scrope of *Endymion*) was exceptional in still wearing " real top boots, and a blue coat and buff waistcoat."

Greville was severe on the behaviour of the new men. He hears that the " noise and uproar is perfectly disgusting. This used not to be the case in better, or at least more gentlemanlike times ; no noises were permissible but the cheer and the cough, the former admitting every variety of intonation expressive of admiration, assent, denial, surprise, indignation, menace, sarcasm. Now all the musical skill of this instrument is lost and drowned in shouts, hootings, groans, noises, the most discordant that the human throat can emit, sticks and feet beating against the floor." We may

congratulate the old-time member on the faculty of expressing such various emotions by a "cheer"; it must have been the result of much training and practice. And certainly the Irish Brigade might with advantage have used this more dignified vehicle of emotion. They greeted Disraeli's first speech (1837) with "hisses, groans, catcalls, drumming with the feet, loud conversation, and imitation of animals"; and in the same year they made a most disorderly demonstration against Lyndhurst, turning upon him "with every possible gesture and intonation of insult. The din lasted for nearly thirty minutes, in spite of all the endeavours of the Speaker." But let us not forget that such scenes were not unknown before 1832; nor, after that date, were they the monopoly of the Irish or the Radicals. Croker, in a letter to Lord Hertford, describes a live rat being brought into the House of Lords. In the same House we hear that (April 1831) a noble marquis shook his fist at a noble duke, and was held back by his coat-tails—"It is impossible to describe the confusion, the noise, the impetuosity that prevailed from one end of the House to the other. The Peeresses present seemed alarmed. Some of the Peers were, as it appeared in the confusion, almost scuffling!" And in May 1846 Greville records of a Corn Law debate: "When Peel spoke, they [the Protectionists] screamed and hooted at him in the most brutal manner. When he vindicated himself, and talked of honour and conscience, they assailed him with shouts of derision, and gestures of contempt."

The new House was seething and fermenting with restless activities. The new members had to reckon with new constituents, some of whom were actuated by delusive hopes. Orators had promised beef and mutton for a penny a pound on the passing of the Bill, "to say nothing of ale at a penny a quart." They evidently had adopted Jack Cade's programme of Reform—"The three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer." Mrs Edward Bulwer wrote to a friend (26th January 1831): "All the common people are now persuaded that the Reform Bill will feed and clothe them for nothing. Poor geese!"

Probably the more intelligent ten-pounders did not look for such extravagant boons; but there was a spirit of optimism in the air, and something considerable was expected of the representatives. Then there were the men of trade and business, who looked for quick reform in the law and in Government offices — people like Mr G. O. A. Head (in *Coningsby*), the admirer of the Manchester Bank—"That's a noble institution, full of commercial enterprise; understands the age, Sir; high pressure to the backbone." There were also the theoretical folk, described by Charles Villiers as "the independent, general-happiness things-to-be-measured-by-their-utility people." There was certainly a great deal to be "reformed," and in the constituencies the Gradgrinds, the Bounderbys and the Honeythunders —practical men, self-made men, philanthropic men whose philanthropy was somewhat marred by Paul Pry methods —were very busy arguing that for all institutions Utility was the only criterion.

Tried by this test, "placemen" were found wanting. "A placeman," writes Greville, in 1835, "is in these days an odious animal, and as a double placeman I am doubly odious . . . the funds from which I draw my means do not somehow seem a pure source; formerly these things were tolerated, now they are not." "Work is now required from everyone who receives wages," said bullying Mr Slope (in *Barchester Towers*) to meek old Mr Harding. By the test of utility the Church herself became suspect, and especially the Irish Church, of whose bishoprics ten were suppressed in 1833. There was a clamour for the expulsion of the Bishops from the House of Lords. One Reformer said he would leave two. "To keep up the breed, I suppose," remarked Lord Alvanley. In these matters Dissenters had to be placated, and a Church Rate Bill (1837) brought the Bishops into collision with the Prime Minister in the House of Lords. "The Tories lauded and the Whigs abused the Bishops, both vehemently." It was not an edifying affair.

Amongst other institutions that attracted the attention of Parliament were the Borough Corporations. Melbourne,

in his characteristic "why can't you leave it alone" way, observed that the country had got on very well with them for centuries; but they were in fact all of a piece with the rotten boroughs—as corrupt, as "close" and as unrepresentative; their administration of public money was wasteful, and sometimes worse than wasteful. As a preliminary to their reform, and to Church and other reforms, the Whigs had recourse to obtaining a report from a Commission of Enquiry. "All things in Heaven and Earth," it was said, "were handed over to a Commission of Whig barristers of seven years' standing." In the House of Lords Lyndhurst went through the names of the twenty Commissioners who reported on the Corporations, and showed that *they* at any rate were all Whigs, except Joseph Parkes (a notorious Radical) and Sir Francis Palgrave. A few years later Sydney Smith, once so doughty a champion of Reform, wrote: "Liberality is now a lucrative business. Whoever has any institution to destroy, may consider himself as a Commissioner and his fortune is made." The *onus probandi*, he said, rested with anyone who said that he was *not* a Commissioner. The Tory hatred of this system as applied to the Church was expressed by Archdeacon Grantly (in *Barchester Towers*), who felt "that the whole establishment had to a certain degree been made vile by the touch of Whig Commissioners."

We may conclude, then, that the ranks of the Reformers in this famous Parliament contained many zealous men whose zeal was in excess of their experience, many earnest, sincere men, and many able, unselfish, public-spirited men. Doubtless there were some who displayed "presumption, impertinence and self-insufficiency," some who bore vindictive grudges against the Church and the House of Lords, and some (as in all Parliaments) who came to Westminster with a view to self-advancement. In its vague enthusiasm and its amorphous size this great majority must have resembled Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's great majority of 1906, which has been so amusingly described by Mr H. G. Wells in *The New Machiavelli*. In both these assemblies the idea prevailed that

now at last the dawn of the Millennium was about to break, that national happiness and prosperity could be attained if only a great many Commissions were appointed and a great many Bills passed. And the Reform Parliament did pass some good and useful and overdue measures—the Bank Charter Act, the Factory Act, reform of the Privy Council, a grant for Education, the Emancipation of Slaves, and some useful legal reforms.

All large majorities are difficult to control, and this one was especially difficult. The new members were unused to Parliamentary discipline, and the Radicals were out of touch with the Ministers, who were Whig aristocrats. But if they were disinclined to acknowledge the authority of their leaders, they were sensitive to the wishes of their constituents. Croker condemned this relationship as "a system of delegation and dependence." In *Ten Thousand a Year* Samuel Warren contrasts with aristocratic Mr Aubrey a new kind of Member of Parliament—"a paltry delegate, handcuffed by pledges on public questions, and laden with injunctions concerning petty local interests only." Attempts had been made by constituents in the eighteenth century to impose this system on their representatives, and to control their independence by "instructions."[8] It was the relationship which Bristol tried to impose upon Burke, and to which Burke refused to submit. "Independence nowadays," wrote Greville in 1834, "relates more to constituents than to the governing power. Nobody is suspected of being dependent on the Crown or the Minister, and the question is if a man be independent of the popular cry or of his own constituency." That light-hearted attitude which Creevey assumed towards "my dear constituents" was no longer possible. The Duke of Wellington was, in these days, apprehensive lest this want of Parliamentary subordination might make party government impossible, but after a little time his fears proved groundless. The instinct of self-preservation soon teaches politicians the necessity of acting in concert. The party system broke down much more seriously through the Tory split of 1846, which had the effect of confusing Party for the next thirteen years.

Thanks to Reform the danger of civil war was averted. And yet, although this prime object was attained, and although everywhere there was great public rejoicing, it is easy to understand the apprehensions with which the great event of 1832 was regarded by all who had a "stake" in the country. In 1688 Divine Right was discredited, and the King who claimed it was driven into exile. "What we did at the Revolution," said Johnson in his old age, "was necessary, but it broke our Constitution." Burke maintained, on the contrary, that it cured a "peccant" part of our Constitution, which was thereby brought to a state of perfection; and the Tories of 1832, whatever they still thought of 1688, had become Burkeites in this sense—that they believed that any change at all would now be for the worse. "If I had imposed on me the duty of framing a legislature for any country," said the Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords (2nd November 1830), "I do not mean to assert that I could form such a legislature as you possess now, for the nature of man is incapable of recasting such excellence at once, but my great endeavour would be to form some description of legislature which would produce the same results." So of 1832 the Duke and his high Tory followers would have said what Johnson said of 1688—that what was done then was necessary, but that it "broke our Constitution." The nation was moving from the known to the unknown. A venerable lady [9] who died quite recently, and yet could remember those days, has written: "The flood-gates were opened in 1832, and never since has the current stopped." This was the favourite metaphor of Sir Leicester Dedlock, whom Dickens presented as the type of the stupid reactionary Tory; but can anyone now say whither the current is carrying us? It is true that the fears which Macaulay had ridiculed were duly falsified. No Marats, no Santerres appeared in the House of Commons; it has been reserved for our own day to see therein members who openly advocate a violent revolution. By 1835 even the high Tory Gladstone could take a sanguine view of the situation: "To think that notwithstanding the Ten-Pound Clause a moderate Parliament may be returned; in fine, to

believe that we have now *some* prospect of surviving the *Reform* Bill without a bloody revolution, is to me as surprising as delightful; it seems to me the greatest and most providential mercy with which a nation was ever visited." Nevertheless, since 1832, wise and thoughtful Englishmen have been continually obsessed by forebodings as to the stability of our social order. If France has never had a stable Government since 1789, England has never been free from political uneasiness since 1832. In 1842 armed mobs destroyed factories; Stockport was plundered and part of Manchester destroyed; Peel requisitioned arms to protect his country house. In 1846 Croker (writing to Brougham) prophesies that, after a period of anarchy, "we shall have a federal republic after the American fashion." It was Gladstone's opinion that there would have been a revolution if the Corn Laws had not been repealed. In 1848 Matthew Arnold writes from London: "It will be *rioting* here, only; still, the hour of the hereditary peerage and eldest sonship and immense properties has, I am convinced, as Lamartine would say, struck. . . . Carlyle gives our institutions, as they are called, aristocracy, Church, etc., five years, I heard last night." In this year houses in the West End of London were put in a state of fortification. In 1850 Stanley writes to Croker, with reference to the next General Election: "If this or any Free Trade Government *then* acquire a majority, the game is up; and I firmly believe we shall be in a rapid progress towards a republic in name as well as reality. . . . We are falling into the fatal sleep which precedes mortification and death." Henry Drummond to Croker (1853): "I say that Bright is right, and we are on the eve of becoming a Republic." Carlyle (*Journal*, 1866): "Sometimes I think the tug of revolution struggle may be even *near* for poor England, much nearer than I once judged—very questionable to me whether England won't go quite to *smash* under it." Shaftesbury to Granville (1868): "Be assured, my dear friend, that no merely human skill will save the British Empire from utter shipwreck." I will conclude with a wail from Beaconsfield, who so rarely desponded, in a letter written to Lord John

Manners in December 1880: "And yet I see no prospect of salvation, and really believe that you, at least, will live long enough to see the crown fall from our gracious Sovereign's head."

I could quote, if it were necessary, sad vaticinations to which many other personages have given utterance since 1832, men so diverse as Harrowby, Hobhouse, Wellington, Greville, Salisbury, Dr Arnold, Bagehot, Lowe and Peel. The fear common to all of them arises from a deep-seated conviction that government can only be properly carried on by the few and not by the many. But this is a doctrine which, since Reform, could not be preached from a platform by any politician who valued his career. It has been more and more necessary for anyone who aspires to political success to pay compliments to democracy, and no doubt many of these compliments have been sincere. Yet the most sincere believers have become disillusioned. Lord Morley, towards the close of his long life, asked: "As for progress, what signs of it are there now? And all the Victorians believed in it from the Utilitarians onwards."

At least we may say that the fears of a cataclysm have not yet been fulfilled. Our social order still stands unbroken, and we have much that may hearten us to look the doubtful future in the face.[10] In writing of a period of transition one may also remark that the men whose gloomy prophecies I have quoted, and who were not fools, were nearly all survivors from the previous age—an age which was so far from taking the virtues of representative government for granted that it regarded "democracy" as almost certainly connoting revolution. Democracy was associated with the excesses of the French Revolution, and that revolution was almost as near to the men of 1830-1832 as Queen Victoria's first Jubilee is to ourselves. "A perfect democracy," wrote Burke, "is the most shameless thing in the world"—because it is absolute and unrestrained. Croker continued of the same opinion in 1845: "The *facilis descensus Averni*—that is Democracy." To the progressive Whig or Liberal, it is true, Croker stood for reaction and blind pessimism. But Macaulay himself, who

detested Croker, said of purely democratic institutions that "they must sooner or later destroy liberty or civilization or both." We have lately heard a cant phrase about "making the world safe *for* Democracy." Our great-grandfathers were preoccupied in making the world safe *from* Democracy. As late as 1865 Disraeli was hoping that the House of Commons would "sanction no step that has a tendency to democracy." Now the Reform Bill was inspired by the same democratic ideal as had inspired the French Revolution. The vote was a Right, one of the Rights of Man, a Right that should be claimed by all, and not (as Disraeli used to argue) a privilege that should be granted only to those who proved they deserved it. Though the Bill enfranchised only 220,000 voters, it recognized the democratic principle of an individual's right to a vote, and that Parliament should be in this sense "representative." But this theory of representation, also, was clean contrary to the doctrine of Burke. "When," he asked, "did you hear in Great Britain of any province suffering from the inequality of its representation; what district from having no representation at all? Not only our monarchy and our peerage secure the equality on which our unity depends, but it is the spirit of the House of Commons itself. . . . Cornwall elects as many members as all Scotland, but is Cornwall better taken care of than Scotland? Few trouble their heads about any of your bases, out of some giddy clubs." In 1794 the Attorney-General, prosecuting Thomas Hardy for high treason, described representative government as "the direct contrary of the government which is established here." There was a Tory view held in that day that men should first decide what sort of persons would be their best representatives and then, second, what sort of persons would be most likely to elect them. There may be something to be said for this old-fashioned notion; but it is only necessary here to bear in mind how it contrasts with the later doctrine — that the more numerous the electors the wiser will be the representative.

The Reform Movement in England, says Mr G. M. Trevelyan, began with the Yorkshire freeholders, afterwards

received support from the philosophic Dissenters, and still later from the working classes. Was it also in the end inspired by ideas even more subversive than those of Paine and Hardy? Burke knew something of the "secret societies" that lighted and fanned the flame of the French Revolution, and whose object was not merely French Revolution but World Revolution. "A confused movement is felt, that threatens a general earthquake in the political world. Already confederacies and correspondencies of the most extraordinary nature are forming in several countries." Mrs Webster, who in her books, *The French Revolution* and *World Revolution*, has traced the existence in Europe of these secret sects from the twelfth century, is inclined to regard the French Revolution of 1830, which gave such an impetus to our own Reformers, as exceptional, as "in the main not a social but a political revolution . . . its strength lay not with the workmen, but with the *bourgeoisie*, and it was the *bourgeoisie* who triumphed." It was not, in her view, subversive, as were the movements of 1789 and 1848. But one of Disraeli's characters, Baron Sergius in *Endymion*, expresses a very different opinion: "The barricades were not erected by the middle class. I know these people; it is a fraternity, not a nation. Europe is honeycombed with their secret societies. They are spread all over Spain. Italy is entirely mined. . . . I have spoken to the Duke about these things. He is not indifferent or altogether incredulous, but he is so essentially practical that he can only deal with what he sees." And of our own disturbances Disraeli observed that, though wages were low, "the tumultuous assemblies, ending frequently in riot, were held in districts where this cause did not prevail. . . . The Government had reason to believe that foreign agents were actively promoting these mysterious crimes.".[11]

It might be possible to ascertain whether any evidence for Disraeli's statement is to be found in the archives of our public offices. The ostensible and respectable leaders of Liberal movements, the Greys and John Russells, sometimes know little of the subterranean forces that lend strength to their efforts, and of the motives of mysterious and unavowed

co-operators. Revolution, at any rate, was in the air in 1832. "Numbers of military men of all ranks and many naval men," said Place, "all men of experience, were ready to undertake to organize and conduct the operations of the people. . . . I had personal communication with no less than thirteen officers, the lowest in rank of whom was a major." If plotters of a still more sinister hue were working and organizing, their hopes of a general overturn were disappointed when the King and the Tory peers gave way.

The revolutionary majors and rural incendiaries had played their part in the drama, and now disappeared from the scene. The stage was left to be occupied by the middle classes, for whom Place had nothing but contempt—"among the most despicable people in the nation in a public point of view." For the next thirty-five years the middle classes were to have a preponderant voting power, and to make their standards respected politically and socially, in art, religion and literature, and in the Court itself. Through the greater part of this period the aristocratic Whigs still engrossed office; before it ended office also was beginning to be shared by the men of the middle classes.

NOTES

[1] *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, p. 267.

[2] In 1819 Croker had supported the enfranchisement of these towns. He then gave Manchester a population of 112,000, Birmingham, 97,000, Leeds, 54,000.

[3] *Endymion*, chap. xvii.

[4] These riots are exhaustively described in Mr and Mrs Hammond's *The Village Labourer* (chap. xi.: "The Last Labourers' Revolt").

[5] From various *Letters* and *Memoranda* of Croker's, mostly in the year 1831.

[6] *Endymion*, chap. lxxvi.

[7] *Collections and Recollections* (G. W. E. Russell), p. 92. This author also states that, on the passing of the Reform Bill, Lord Bathurst solemnly cut off his pigtail, saying, "Ichabod, for the glory is departed."

[8] See Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (Cabinet Edition), vol. i., p. 467; vol. iii., p. 375.

[9] Mrs Haldane of Cloan, born April 1825, died May 1925, *My Memories of Ninety Years Ago* (*The Spectator*, 11th April 1925).

[10] The General Strike of May 1926, and its speedy collapse, took place after this chapter was written.

[11] *Endymion*, chap. viii. Disraeli has much to say of secret societies in his *Lord George Bentinck*. At page 497 "men of Jewish race are found at the head of every one of them." At page 554 he writes of them as "striking at property and Christ." See also *Benjamin Disraeli* (Buckle), vol. iv., pp. 49, 339; vol. v., p. 156.

III

THE MIDDLE CLASSES

How subdivided—Princely Merchants—Manchester Plutocrats—"Voice of the Omnibus"—Artisans—Brougham extols them—Cobden, Peel, Bright—Dissenters—Power of Wesleyans—The Duke on Dissent—The Nonconformist Conscience—Victoria not a Sabbatarian—Puritan Influence of Middle Classes—Prudery of Thackeray & Trollope—And of Tennyson—Surtees an Exception—Example of Mr Punch—The Victorian Veto—John Bright's Conceitedness—Cobden despises Aristocracy—Dickens's Foolish Aristocrats—The Conservative Middle Class—Politics of the City—Palmerston & the Middle Classes—They support the Crimean War—The Volunteers—Volunteers accused of Snobbery—Insularity of Middle Classes—Lord Odo Russell & Mr Podsnap—English Manners on the Continent—The German Fleet derided—Materialism of Middle Classes—Their Want of Cohesion and "Connexion"—Aristotle on the Middle Classes.

IT had been the deliberate policy of the Whigs to give greater political power to the middle classes. Althorp plainly stated that the Government intended "to place the representation in the hands of the majority of the middle classes," and Macaulay, in one of his great speeches on the Bill (House of Commons, 2nd March 1831), said that its principle was "to admit the middle class to a large and direct share in the representation, without any violent shock to the institutions of our country."

The "Great World" of the pre-Reform era, according to Disraeli, consisted of the landed aristocracy, which had absorbed much of the wealth of the Nabobs[1] and West Indians, and grudgingly admitted into its circle eminent bankers and merchants, if these had bought themselves landed estates. This was the ruling or upper class—a limited and well-defined class. Then who and what were the middle classes?

I use the plural advisedly, because that portion of the nation which then became powerful is not easy to define. In fact, we still speak of the "Middle Class," and of the "Upper Middle Class," and of the "Lower Middle Class." Mr G. M. Trevelyan, writing of the year 1832, provides us with a useful definition: "The middle class—a term that then covered all grades of society, from the humblest clerk or village shopkeeper up to the wealthiest moneyed magnate in the country." [2] Twenty-eight years later Bulwer Lytton, in the House of Commons, referred to those whom the Bill had enfranchised as "the middle ranks of society, which cannot be called a class, because it comprises all classes, from the educated gentleman to the skilled artisan, and which does represent a high average of the common sense of the common interest." [3]

There were, therefore, three middle classes. First came the great moneyed men who had not become "landed"—"the princely merchant in his counting-house," to use a phrase of Palmerston's. Mr Dombey may be regarded as a type. His wealth enabled him to marry a lady of noble family. ("They're poor indeed," admitted Major Bagstock, "but if you come to blood, sir!") Mr Dombey's connexions, and his pride, were those of a city merchant. His dinner guests were East India directors, bank directors, chairmen of public companies. Mrs Dombey's guests were aristocratic —and accordingly Dickens has to make them vain and foolish. The husband's friends and the wife's friends had nothing in common. "As the greater part of Mr Dombey's list were disposed to be taciturn, and the greater part of Mrs Dombey's list were disposed to be talkative, and there was no sympathy between them, Mrs Dombey's list, by magnetic agreement, entered into a bond of union against Mr Dombey's list." The division is clearly marked, though the gulf does not yawn quite so widely as in the time of Addison, when Lady Mary Anvil made her husband, the city knight, "confine himself to the cock-loft" on the occasion of her evening party.

Gladstone's father was an eminent member of this class.

"I should name him to the Queen," wrote Peel to Gladstone (1846), "as the honoured representative of a great class of the community which has raised itself by its integrity and industry to high social eminence." Peel was then desirous of making the elder Gladstone a baronet, and we may notice that a baronetcy—in spite of the high, fantastic notions which Disraeli's Sir Vavasour Firebrace entertained concerning his order—was now becoming a middle-class distinction. "A baronetcy," said Lady Joan FitzWarene in *Sybil*, "has become the distinction of the middle class; a physician, our physician for example, is a baronet; and I daresay some of our tradesmen, brewers, or people of that class." So Sir Gorgius Midas in a later period (*Punch*, 15th May 1880) thought it an honour suitable for "a heminent Sawbones, or a Hingerneer, or a Littery Man, or even a successful Hartist." Gladstone himself, though praised in his old age for his "stately and old-world courtesy," seemed to Miss Emily Eden, a lady of acute social perceptions, in 1860 somewhat uncouth. "And, to complete my list of sins, there is the same degree of parvenuism about him that there was about Sir R. Peel—something in the tone of his voice and his way of coming into the room that is not aristocratic." Sir Robert Peel himself was noted for his awkward demeanour, and his middle-class origin was never forgotten—least of all by those Tories who believed he had betrayed them.

Besides the great bankers and financiers and merchants we may include in this class those whom the Industrial Revolution had enriched—"the large, wealthy class of manufacturing capitalists who regarded with jealous eyes the monopoly of political power that was now in the hands of the territorial aristocracy."[4] Some of these *nouveaux riches* retained very simple habits. Cobden describes certain Manchester worthies of 1829: "The sturdy veterans with £100,000 in each pocket, who might be seen in the evening smoking clay pipes and calling for brandy and water, in the bar-parlours of homely taverns." Woollcombe, Molesworth's solicitor, writes to Lady Molesworth in 1837 of certain

citizens of Leeds : " A deputation of would-be constituents —the dirtiest dogs you ever beheld, but they say all mighty rich."

The middle section of the middle classes might be said to include the lesser manufacturers and merchants, professional men—lawyers, doctors, professors, college dons, schoolmasters, architects, artists, actors, musicians, also clergymen and officers in the Army and Navy, who were without " connexion "—*i.e.* did not belong to the ruling families. It would also include farmers and tradesmen. " The farmers of the United Kingdom," said Disraeli, " are the most numerous and the most important portion of the middle class." In this section were the most intelligent and cultured members of the middle classes ; their political complexion would be Peelite—*i.e.* Liberal-Conservative—or Palmerstonian—*i.e.* Conservative-Liberal. It was a class that provoked the scorn of Cobden—" the genteel shopkeepers and professional men who depend upon appearances, and live by a false external." In this class would be found that personage whom Palmerston held in respect, " the fat man in a white hat in the twopenny omnibus." This new means of conveyance became peculiarly associated with the middle part of the middle classes ; Bagehot quotes a saying : " Public opinion is the opinion of the bald-headed man at the back of the omnibus." [5]

The third section of the middle classes, the lower middle class, contained a certain number of artisans. " I see with pleasure," said Macaulay in the House of Commons (16th December 1831), " that, by the provisions of the Reform Bill, the most industrious and respectable of our labourers will be admitted to a share in the government of the State." He went on to explain that if he was against granting to the bulk of the working classes " that larger share of power which some of them have demanded," it was only because he would thereby " increase their distress," for that this would result in their being governed " according to the doctrines which they have learned from their illiterate, incapable, low-minded flatterers." The great party which

supported the Bill was "the middle class of England, with the flower of the aristocracy at its head, and the flower of the working classes bringing up the rear." We might add to this section of the middle classes the clerks and shopmen, such men as Mr Dick Swiveller, Mr Guppy and Mr Tittlebat Titmouse. Some also of these latter succumbed to the temptation of "living by a false external"; already in the *Punch* of 1848 we find our friend "'Arry" arrayed in "a stunning greatcoat," and aping the fashions of more opulent folk.

Taking them as a whole, it may be said that Trade and Dissent were the two strongest elements of the middle classes. And since 1688 the trading and dissenting interests had been the chief supporters of the Whig party.

As it was certain that the middle classes were to be politically powerful, it was inevitable that they should soon hear flattering voices. Among the flatterers was Brougham. He extolled them as "the genuine depositaries of sober, rational, intelligent and honest feeling. They will neither be led astray by false reasoning, nor deluded by impudent flattery; but so neither will they be scared by classical quotations, or browbeaten by fine sentences; and as for an epigram, they care as little for it as they do for a cannon ball." They were, indeed, more prone to ignore, than to be scared by, classical quotations. Was it not an eminent leader of the middle classes who made himself responsible for the opinion that one copy of *The Times* contained more useful information than the whole of the historical books of Thucydides?[6] Their strength was not likely to be sapped by any undue subservience to tradition, but in the first years after Reform it was dissipated by a want of common aim and by defective organization. They had won Reform but were by no means unanimous as to what measures should follow, until the Corn Laws provided them with a fresh objective for united attack. "In Cobden, in fact, the middle classes found themselves. By his victory in the struggle that raged around the Corn Laws he dealt a

staggering blow to the power of the aristocracy, and thus completed the work begun by the Reformers in 1832." [7] Of this struggle Cobden asserted that "it has eminently been a middle-class agitation." His aim was to take away power from "the landed oligarchy" and place it "in the hands of the intelligent middle and industrious classes." He expressed admiration for the "earnest, energetic men of the shopkeeping class." And so the middle class became a class with which statesmen of both the great parties had to make their account.

In his character of Peel, Greville writes of "the middle classes, those formidable masses, occupying the vast space between aristocracy and democracy, with whom Peel was anxious to ingratiate himself, and whose support he considered his best reliance." But John Bright exulted in their strength. "The present Parliament contains a larger number of men of business than any former Parliament. The present Government is essentially of the middle class (*A laugh*), and its members have on many occasions shown their sympathy with it. Let the honourable gentleman laugh; but he will not deny that no government can long have a majority in this House which does not sympathize with the great middle class of this country." [8] In matters other than political, also, the middle class was to develop what is now called "class consciousness." For instance, when it was decided to remove the Crystal Palace from Hyde Park, a Mr Heywood protested, and urged that it should remain there and be turned into a winter-garden as a small concession "to the opinions and wishes of the middle classes."

In the foregoing pages I have divided the middle classes horizontally, according to their wealth. They may also be separated vertically, according to their religion and politics, into two fairly distinct parts: (1) Dissenters, who were generally Liberal or Radical; and (2) Churchmen, who were generally Conservative. If we think of the middle classes as lacking cohesion, we must except the Dissenters.

Religious folk always have the organization of church or chapel membership ; when they have grievances it is almost certain that this organization will act aggressively. The Dissenters of 1832, though enjoying religious liberty, still nourished grievances about tithes, church rates, marriages and burials, and they have never been slow to find a political outlet for their religious zeal. And, besides specific grievances, the Nonconformist felt—and even to this day feels, though in a much lesser degree—a vague discontent because (to use Matthew Arnold's words) he is " not in contact with the main current of national life, like the member of an Establishment." He was then much more than now, to quote again the same writer, " like Ephraim, ' a wild ass alone by himself.' "

I do not know whether the numerical strength of Dissent in the year 1832 can be estimated. According to Lecky, in the year 1689 the English Nonconformists, with the Roman Catholics added, were to the Church of England in the proportion of 1 to 22. The Nonconformists of the early eighteenth century, principally Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Unitarians, were not proselytizers. Dissent and Church alike were torpid. But then came the Wesleyans, who were enthusiastic in obtaining new adherents. At Wesley's death, in 1791, they could boast, in the British Dominions, of 313 preachers and 78,000 members. In the next forty years it is certain that they increased enormously. At the present day they have a world strength of 32,000,000.

Even before the Reform Bill, in the Anti-Slavery agitation, the Nonconformists had made their strength felt by politicians ; Greville wrote in 1830 of the " enormous influence " of the Methodists. After 1832 it became still more rash to disregard them. Let us cite the testimony of that sensitive political barometer, Mr Tadpole, given on two occasions, and note that each time he refers in particular to the Wesleyans. The first occasion was in 1834, when William the Fourth dismissed the Whigs, and for four months Peel assumed office :

" ' I tell you what, Mr Taper ; the time is gone by when a Marquess of Monmouth was Letter A, No. 1.'

" ' Very true, Mr Tadpole. A wise man would do well now to look to the great middle class, as I said the other day to the electors of Shabbyton.'

" ' I had sooner be supported by the Wesleyans,' said Mr Tadpole, ' than by all the marquesses in the peerage.' " [9]

The second pronouncement of this acute and discerning Mr Tadpole dates from the crisis of 1839, when Peel failed to form a Cabinet owing to the difficulty about the Ladies of the Queen's Bedchamber. Lord Rambrooke's chance of succeeding to " the Buckhounds " is being discussed, and Lord Marney objects that " that fellow Rambrooke keeps a Frenchwoman. It is not much known, but it is a fact."

" ' Dreadful ! ' exclaimed Mr Tadpole. ' I have no doubt of it. But he has no chance with the Buckhounds ; you may rely on that. Private character is to be the basis of the new Government. Since the Reform Act that is a qualification much more esteemed by the constituency than public services. We must go with the times, my lord. A virtuous middle class shrinks with horror from French actresses ; and the Wesleyans, the Wesleyans must be considered, Lord Marney.'

" ' I always subscribe to them,' said his lordship." [10]

Let us turn from Mr Tadpole, designed by Disraeli as the type of a mean opportunist and tactician, to the Duke of Wellington, the patriot and statesman.

" The Revolution is made," he writes to Croker (6th March 1833)—" that is to say, that power is transferred from one class of society, the gentlemen of England, professing the faith of the Church of England, to another class of society, the shopkeepers, being dissenters from the Church, many of them Socinians, others Atheists. I don't think the influence of property in this country is in the abstract diminished. That is to say, the gentry have as many followers and influence as many voters at elections as ever they did. But a new democratic influence has been introduced into elections, the copy-holders and free-holders

and lease-holders residing in towns which do not themselves return members to Parliament. These are all dissenters from the Church, and are everywhere a formidably active party against the aristocratic influence of the Landed Gentry. There are dissenters in every village in the country; they are the blacksmith, the carpenter, the mason, etc., etc., the new influence established in the town has drawn them and their party; and it is curious to see to what a degree it is a dissenting interest."

The Duke seems here to be obsessed by the power of Dissent, which he regards as the sole transferee of the power formerly held by aristocracy. His archaic and Eldonian Toryism had no faith in the innate conservatism of the nation. Lyndhurst thought the same as the Duke: "You have transferred power to a class of a lower description, and particularly to the great body of Dissenters."

Nor was the political ardour of the Nonconformists always appreciated by the Whig leaders, though they therefrom drew their main support. "I do not like the Dissenters," said Melbourne; "their only object is power." Eminent Whigs, not themselves Nonconformists, could not reasonably be expected to concur in John Bright's arrogant assurance that "if a good measure is to be carried in this House, it must be by men who are sent hither by the Nonconformists of Great Britain." Throughout the Victorian era Nonconformity maintained and increased its strength in Liberal politics. Cobden said that Dissent was the soul of the Liberal Party; Matthew Arnold that Nonconformists made the strength of the Liberal majority in the House of Commons. In 1890, after the decree against Parnell in the Divorce Court, the Whig Harcourt writes to Gladstone: "You know that the Nonconformists are the backbone of our Party, and their judgment in this matter is unhesitating and decisive." Later, in the time of Campbell-Bannerman's Ministry, Licensing Bills and Education Bills and Welsh Disestablishment Bills all drew their inspiration from "the Nonconformist conscience." But in the field of politics the Puritan ideal is now no longer paramount; it

has had to yield place to more material and elemental forces.

A political influence is sure to react as a social influence. After the Reform Bill we find Dissent, reinforced by Church Evangelicalism (and they had much in common), exercising —consciously or unconsciously—a hitherto unfelt restraint upon morals and manners. We must not exclude as a contributory factor that the Court became purer upon the accession of William the Fourth. "Queen Adelaide," wrote Greville, "is a prude, and will not let the ladies come *décolletées* to her parties. George IV., who liked ample expanses of that sort, would not let them be covered"; and later: "the Court is mighty prudish." Still less must we undervalue the great example, held up before the nation for twenty years, of the unblemished married life of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, who insisted on spotless character in applicants for office—in spite of Melbourne's warning as to the dangers of "that d——d morality." But, whatever the virtues of Queen Adelaide, King William was the father of a family of illegitimate children, whose mother he had treated with scant generosity; he was a strange king for a "mighty prudish" Court. Queen Victoria ascended the throne as a girl; in her case the rule of *Maxima debetur reverentia* had every conceivable sanction of chivalry to a very young woman and of respect for a queen. Drunkenness and profanity and coarseness vanished from her Court; they fled like the rout of *Comus* when "driven in" by the Brothers. Even Melbourne discouraged the old custom of giving Rabelaisian toasts. But this respect was personal and natural; and Victoria herself—however strict in some of her views—wholly disagreed with one important tenet of the Puritan creed. She was no Sabbatarian. She liked those Sunday bands in the park which were such an offence to serious folk, and were finally discontinued at the instance of the Archbishop of Canterbury. She insisted that military music should continue to play the troops to church on Sundays. When Ashley carried a resolution discontinuing

Sunday posts she consented, "though *most reluctantly*. . . . The Queen thinks it a very *false* notion of obeying God's will, to do what will be the cause of much annoyance and possibly of great distress to private families." She very much disliked national fast-days and resented the rule that forbade Sunday dinner-parties.

We must go further back than Victoria for the origins of Victorian strictness. It had its source first of all in Methodism, but Methodism scarcely touched the upper classes. The Evangelical revival, and the influence of men like Simeon and Wilberforce, reached higher social levels. At the close of the eighteenth century horror of the French Revolution and fears for the national safety spread through all ranks; religion revived, and both church and chapel were filled.

Shaftesbury was in the true line of this movement; the son of worldly and selfish parents, he came early under the influence of an old servant of his family who was a strict Evangelical, and implanted her own simple beliefs so firmly in his mind that "he believed at eighty what he had believed at seven." The "Victorian" Sunday had its birth not at Windsor, but on Clapham Common. "Wilberforce's Sunday was the precursor of that orthodox Victorian Sunday," says Mr Coupland in his study of Wilberforce.

But though Puritanism and Evangelicalism had their adherents in the "great world" they were chiefly prevalent amongst the "Middle and Lower Middle Classes — the Puritan and Hebraising Middle Class," as Matthew Arnold described them, the class that prevented the National Gallery and the British Museum from being open on Sunday. This part of the community held strong views of what was right and what was decent, and it was now powerful—as it had not been in the days of the great war. In *Sybil*, Rambrooke's connexion with an actress was to disqualify him for a Court appointment. Lord Hertford, who died in 1842, had habits which Greville characterized as "ostentatiously crapulous," and exhibited an example of "undisguised debauchery"; but he was the last nobleman so to offend.

The Duke of Omnium, the Whig magnate in Trollope's *Dr Thorne* (published 1858), was reputed to be "a great debauchee; but, if so, he had always kept his debaucheries decently away from the eyes of the world." Bagehot wrote in 1867: "The aristocracy live in fear of the middle classes —of the grocer and the merchant. They dare not frame a society of enjoyment, as the French aristocracy once formed it." Mr G. K. Chesterton, discoursing on Victorian prudery, remarks: "The great lords yielded on this as on Free Trade."

The great authors also yielded. A standard was set up to which Trollope and Thackeray, Dickens and Tennyson not only conformed, but conformed eagerly and as with conviction. The moralists and novelists of the eighteenth century—Steele, Addison, Johnson, Fielding and Richardson —claimed that their writings had a moral intention, but they often felt themselves free to convey the moral lesson by describing very immoral persons and depicting very immoral scenes; and they were apt to use very plain and unvarnished language. This freedom was no longer to be tolerated. Even crime was deemed an undesirable subject for fiction. Lytton dealt with crime in *Eugene Aram*, and Dickens in *Oliver Twist*; and both thereby gave offence. They contravened the rule of Mrs General in *Little Dorrit*— "A truly refined mind will seem to be ignorant of anything that is not perfectly proper, placid and pleasant." On all that was not "perfectly *proper*" the ban was especially severe.

In addition to the usual criticisms of his style and his art and his knowledge, still another canon was applied to the Early Victorian author: "Were his pages fit to be read aloud *virginibus puerisque*?" "We have a love for all little boys at school," wrote Thackeray in his *Book of Snobs*, "for many scores of thousands of them read and love *Punch*: may he never write a word that shall not be honest and fit for them to read!" "Permit me to say," he writes to *Punch* (and of *Punch*), "that there never was before published in this world so many volumes that contain so much cause for

laughing, and so little for blushing ; so many jokes and so little harm. . . . We will laugh in the company of our wives and children [11] ; we will tolerate no indecorum ; we like that our matrons and girls should be pure." Similarly Trollope, according to Frederic Harrison, " boasted that he had not written a line which a pure woman could not read without a blush. . . . There is not a sentence in the Barsetshire Cycle which should exclude it from the school-room." Trollope had " an honest reverence for the young person and her maiden meditation fancy free." Like Mr Podsnap, he tabooed anything " that was calculated to call a blush into the cheek of a young person." It appears that he did once go so far as to offer to *The Cornhill* a story about a gentleman who was minded to run away with a married woman ; but this was regretfully returned by the editor—and the editor was Thackeray. With a Thackeray to protect him from the rare transgressions of a Trollope, the Victorian reader might feel himself fairly secure. And in this matter Thackeray acutely felt that the genius of Dickens was accountable to the public. " What an awful responsibility hanging over a writer ! What man holding such a place, and knowing that his words go forth to vast congregations of mankind—to grown folks, to their children, and perhaps to their children's children—but must think of his calling with a solemn and humble heart ! May love and truth guide such a man always ! It is an awful prayer ; may heaven further its fulfilment ! " But Thackeray need have suffered from no uneasiness on this score. " In forty works or more," wrote Frederic Harrison of Dickens, " you will not find a page which a mother need withhold from her grown daughter." " A lady may read it *aloud*," said Miss Mitford of *Pickwick*. *Adam Bede*, on the other hand, was " banned from the shelves of the young person's library." [12]

Taine observed that in England there was a literary rule : " Be moral. All your novels must be such as may be read by young girls. . . . We believe in family life, and we would not have literature paint the passions which attack family life. . . . If you venture on a seduction, as in

Copperfield, you do not relate the progress, ardour, intoxication of love; you only depict its miseries, despair and remorse." The Bishop of Manchester, in a funeral sermon at Westminster Abbey, attributed to Dickens "such a natural instinct of purity that there is scarcely a page of the thousands he has written which might not be put into the hands of a little child." But Dickens could ridicule the *excess* of prudery. When Bella Wilfer mentioned her underpetticoat, "neither do I understand," retorted Mrs Wilfer, with deep scorn, "how a young lady can mention the garment in the name in which you have indulged. I blush for you."

Prudery is one of the principal counts in the modern indictment of Tennyson.[13] He is accused of bowdlerizing the Arthur of Malory into the Arthur of the *Idylls*. "He found himself writing with a picture of a very definite audience before him, an audience of young ladies." "He drank just enough port to render himself hypochondriac; he never drank enough port to forget that he was writing for an audience of young ladies." "Domesticity was for Tennyson not so much an ideal as an obsession." Nettled by the vogue of Swinburne, he inserted an erotic—but not very alarmingly erotic—passage into *The Last Tournament*, and then suppressed it at the agonized request of Messrs Macmillan, his publishers. His admirable heroines were above sex; passivity is for him the characteristic of a true woman: "If she has character or will of her own, she is more likely to be impure, or invite impurity, and so prove the agent of evil."

The works of Tennyson and Dickens commanded enormous and very profitable sales; Dickens left a considerable fortune, and Tennyson became a peer of the realm and the owner of two country-houses. Who bought their books? The upper classes were comparatively few in number, and of these few how many had intellectual tastes? They were Matthew Arnold's "Barbarians," the devotees of field sports. The lower classes were ill-educated; if the "Populace" read anything at all (and the majority could

not read), they read the Sunday paper. It must then have been the middle classes, the despised "Philistines," who were the book-buyers. This was the public to whose tastes the Victorian "best-seller" had to defer, and Messrs Macmillan were well aware how easily its sense of propriety might be outraged. Sir Edmund Gosse, writing of Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* (1866), describes English poetry at this time as "a beautiful guarded park" into which, "to the infinite alarm of the fallow deer, a young Bacchus was now preparing to burst, in the company of a troop of Mænads and to the accompaniment of cymbals and clattering kettle-drums."

But there was one Early Victorian novelist who must have gone near to distressing Mrs Grundy. Lord Ernest Hamilton, in *Forty Years On*, has said of Surtees that he bowdlerized the fox-hunter of this period. Not altogether, I think. The jolly, hearty sportsman, with his animal health and spirits, has considerable periods of leisure; the fox-hunter has all the summer months free, besides non-hunting days in the winter. He must amuse himself; and, as he is often wealthy, there are certain denizens of the underworld who mark him down as their peculiar prey. That underworld was drawn by Surtees with realistic strokes. Victorian prudery is almost forgotten in his account of the house-party of Lady Scattercash (*née* Spangles) at Nonsuch House, a party which comprised "several elegantly dressed females, all with cigars in their mouths," including Miss Howard, "whose real name was Brown," and "the beautiful and tolerably virtuous Miss Glitters of the Astley's Royal Amphitheatre." Nonsuch House, in fact, as candid Master Raw blurted out, was "full of trumpets." Nor was the history of Lord Ladythorne, and his "reigning favourite," Mrs Moffat, and Miss De Glancey (the whilom "friend" of Mr Hotspur Smith and Mr Ernest Benson and Mr Woodhouse), quite fit to be read aloud in the schoolroom or the boudoir. We wonder at first why Ladythorne invited the Cockney, Billy Pringle, to stay and hunt with him. But Billy's mother had been lady's-maid

THE GREAT SOCIAL EVIL

Time:—Midnight. A Sketch not a hundred miles from the Haymarket.

Bella: "Ah! Fanny! How long have you been gay."

Mr. M. H. Spielmann, the biographer of "Punch," says that this picture "electrified" "Punch's" readers. "There appears the hand of the reformer perhaps: but primarily a whole heartful of wide sympathy & pathos, from which, with true instinct, the artist has banished every suggestion of humour."

(*See p.* 82)

to a friend of the peer's, and we are led to suspect that there may have been a tie of nature between her son and Ladythorne:

"Der Alte ist dein Vater veilleicht
Auf mütterlicher Seite."

Ladythorne clearly belonged to the eighteenth century; though no doubt, as Billy's mother said, he was "quite as good as his whites of their eyes turning up neighbours." Prudery is a plant difficult to rear in the soil of hunting counties. Nevertheless, in reading Surtees, we are conscious of having travelled far from Fielding. We are introduced to improper persons, but we are not offended by improper words or improper acts. It is a far cry back from Lady Scattercash to Lady Booby.

Mr Chesterton has also propounded a theory that this niceness of Victorian fiction may also have been owing to "the participation of women with men in the matter of fiction . . . the sexes can only be coarse separately." But now, when there are twenty times as many women novelists as there were in Early Victorian days, reticence has been thrown to the winds both by male and female authors. Reticence on the subject of the relations between the sexes is "Victorian" and wholly out of date; writers of both sexes are "coarse"—whether it be in separation or in communion. But Journalism, for some reason, still observes the old convention; and one very eminent journalist, Mr Punch, still the exponent of middle-class sentiment, of whom it may be said (as has recently been said of Thackeray) that "thus ever he skirts the shores of Bohemia without landing," has a consistent record of more than eighty years. He still abstains, as his biographer (Mr M. H. Spielmann) claims for him, "from the unsavoury subjects which form the stock-in-trade of the French humorist." Tennyson, in a moral and patriotic mood, warned us against tasting

"The poisonous honey stol'n from France."

Mr Punch has always been guiltless of the importation

of this deleterious merchandise. He is still as innocent of impropriety as of scurrility. "It is the first paper we ever saw," said a provincial journalist of its first appearance, "which was not vulgar. It will provoke many a hearty laugh, but never call a blush to the most delicate cheek." (O those delicate cheeks! How prone must they have been to blush!) From the mouths of little boys and girls Mr Punch still extracts much of his humour; and their co-contributors—the golfer, the cricketer, the angler, the Cockney, the comic peasant and the comic parson—are equally incapable of "forcing a blush from the fair"—or even of profanity. Leech once published a bitter realistic picture of two women of the town ("The Great Social Evil," *Punch,* 19th September 1857), but this only appeared owing to the temporary absence of the Editor, and the experiment was not repeated.

There was another fortuitous circumstance which exercised a restricting influence on Victorian literature. We are told that Mr W. H. Smith, who grew to manhood "under the solid but stern discipline of Wesleyism," was very particular as to what was sold on his bookstalls. When he took over the railway-station contracts he found some very dubious stuff on sale, but "at one fell swoop the injurious heap was removed."[14] Thus was installed a very efficient censor.

We may well admire the improvement in literary manners that stands to the credit of the Early Victorian journalists and novelists; they put a veto on obscenity, and for this should be honoured. Eighteenth-century writers were too apt to travel beyond what was coarse to what was disgusting. But we need also to remark that the inhibitions of the Victorian age have had no parallel in the literature of any other great country, and that the test applied—"can this be read aloud to our boys and girls?"—would put not only the classics of Greece and Rome, but Shakespeare[15] and Milton, and the Bible itself, on the *Index Expurgatorius.* Let us then pay our tribute to the might of the middle classes, who, for a generation or more, thus imposed their

will upon the Men of Letters. They imposed it also upon the Artists. Mrs E. M. Ward (in her *Memories of Ninety Years*) relates that certain Early Victorians disapproved of her husband's picture of Charles the Second talking to Nell Gwynne. They were "quite surprised that a man of his principles should have immortalized such a scene."

The middle classes, no doubt, led lives of greater regularity and greater industry than did the upper class. But if they were more virtuous, they were certainly conscious of the fact. And in another respect they felt themselves to be superior—in intelligence. John Bright was the very type and exemplar of the good middle-class reformer; he was a great Member of Parliament, a manufacturer, fairly wealthy but not too wealthy, a Quaker, a Free Trader, a Pacifist. He spoke on every subject—domestic, foreign, colonial or imperial—with absolute and unhesitating assurance. "In Bright," said Lord Morley, "there was an unlimited self-confidence which amounted to corruption of the soul." This is a severe judgment, but in reading John Bright's speeches we do recognize an *ex cathedrâ* tone. He may be right or he may be wrong; in his opposition to the Crimean War he was proved to be right. "Well, you were certainly right about that war," said Sir James Graham; "we were entirely wrong, and we should never have gone into it."[16] But whether right or wrong he was always cocksure. Punch had no love for him:

> "There's but one man invariably right,
> And that's Bright!
> He's the man who *always* is right."

Thus he said of the Tories: "They have always been wrong; they always will be wrong; and when they cease to be wrong they will cease to be the Tory party." And of our navy: "I do not believe it is for the advantage of this country, or of any country of the world, that any nation should pride itself upon what is termed the supremacy of the sea." And yet this supremacy might have been considered essential to us in order to protect "the cargoes

which freight the ships of the greatest mercantile navy the world has ever seen." Of the United States: "I believe that these two great countries will march abreast, the parents and the guardians of freedom and justice, wheresoever their language shall be spoken and their powers shall extend." Of Canada: "I believe that if Canada now, by a friendly separation from this country, became an independent state, choosing its own form of government —monarchical, if it liked a monarchy, or republican, if it preferred a republic—it would not be less friendly to England, and its tariff would be no more adverse to our manufacturers than it is now. . . . I do not object to that separation in the least; I believe that it would be better for us and better for her."[17] "If they [the Canadians] should prefer to unite themselves to the United States, I should not complain even of that." It was Bright who denounced "a hundred years of crime against the docile natives of our Indian Empire." The Rock of Gibraltar "was retained contrary to every law of morality and honour," and Cobden could get a ten per cent. treaty by ceding it. (This seems to justify Lord Salisbury's taunt about manufacturers who had written their country's honour off their books "as an unmarketable commodity.") The Protestant Church of Ireland was "that foul blot." As to foreign wars, if we had adopted the principle of non-intervention seventy years ago, "this country would have been a garden, every dwelling might have been of marble, and every person who treads its soil might have been sufficiently educated." To Bright it was as clear as the sun at noonday that in "the great middle classes of this country," and especially in the Nonconformist members of those classes, was to be found all the wisdom of the nation, and that every abuse—war, naval supremacy, our Colonial Empire, the oppression of Indians, the Irish Church—was attributable to "the owners of crowns and coronets."

Cobden was a distinguished representative and champion of the middle classes, but he knew their weak points. They were prone to hanker after promotion to the upper class.

" See how every successful trader buys an estate," he writes to John Bright. His political campaigning had taught him that " people do not attend public meetings to be taught, but to be excited, flattered and pleased." Still, true to his class, he ridiculed " the Noodles and Doodles of the aristocracy," an order of society to which he also applied the epithet " clodpole." Every Reformer was over-anxious to insist on the brainlessness of the nobility and gentry.

The " Noodle and Doodle " theory was adopted with avidity by Dickens ; in *Bleak House* he christens politicians with these very names. In *Nicholas Nickleby* he presents to his readers Lord Frederick Verisopht, the incarnation of silliness and weakness, and, later, Mr Twemlow (first cousin to Lord Snigsworth), who has a " feeble soul " and, faced by a very simple social problem, reflects : " I must not think of this. This is enough to soften any man's brain." Then we have Sir Leicester Dedlock, with his perpetual tag about " opening the floodgates," and Cousin Feenix, who is made to proceed like a crab " sideways by reason of his wilful legs," and signs his name in the wrong place at Dombey's wedding. These are aristocrats, and, because they are aristocrats, Dickens makes them physical or mental degenerates ; to him members of the aristocracy are *ex hypothesi* fools, and " tenth transmitters of a foolish face." But, however foolish they may be, it is remarkable that they are almost without exception unselfish and honourable. Lord Frederick is slain by Sir Mulberry Hawk for opposing that Baronet's wicked designs upon the Nicklebys. Sir Leicester, apart from " the constrained formalities and conventionalities of his life," is the most chivalrous and devoted of husbands. " His noble earnestness, his fidelity, his gallant shielding of her, his generous conquest of his own wrong and his own pride for her sake, are simply honourable, manly, and true." To Rouncewell, whom he dislikes, he is courteous and hospitable " with all the nature of a gentleman shining in him." He is, in fact, as true a gentleman as Colonel Newcome. Then it is to foolish Twemlow that Mrs Lammle appeals in her degradation and

distress: "You have the soul of a gentleman, and I know I may trust you." *Our Mutual Friend*, in fact, ends in Twemlow's glorification. Ferdinand Barnacle, though a minion of the Circumlocution Office, "was a very easy pleasant fellow indeed, and his manners were exceedingly winning." Out of pure good nature he visits Clennam in prison—"nothing could be more agreeable than his frank and courteous bearing or adapted with a more gentlemanly instinct to the circumstances of his visit." We even feel attracted towards Lord Decimus Tite Barnacle and his story of Eton *pears* and Parliamentary *pairs*. If the Barnacles were limpets, they were polite limpets. There was a particle of truth in Gowan's claim that the Circumlocution Office was "a school for gentlemen." But Cousin Feenix, in *Dombey and Son*, is the most charming of all Dickens's aristocrats. His speech at Dombey's wedding breakfast, though quaint, is perfect in taste and good feeling; but he is equal to a much more trying occasion—his interview with Dombey after Mrs Dombey ("my lovely and accomplished relative, as I must still beg leave to call her") has eloped with Carker; here he tempers his genuine sympathy with Dombey by a firm reservation in favour of the "lovely and accomplished" one "until her criminality is perfectly established," and he afterwards gives her a shelter and a home. His manner, Dickens admits, was "always a gentleman's, in spite of the harmless eccentricities that attached to it."

It used to be said that Dickens could not draw the portrait of a gentleman; on the contrary he drew a gallery of such portraits, but he drew them, as it were, in spite of himself. They are eccentrics, and have their mannerisms; but, after all, are they fools? Where there is tact, quick intuition, breeding, honour and kindness of heart, there must also be intelligence. And how human and real they appear in comparison with his stiff conventional upper middle-class gentlemen—the Arthur Clennams, Martin Chuzzlewits and Nicholas Nicklebys, with their set speeches and heroics! "You, who sent me to a den where

sordid cruelty, worthy of yourself, runs wanton, and youthful misery stalks prococious." "Whence will curses come at your command? Or what avails a curse or blessing from a man like you? I tell you, that misfortune and discovery are thickening about your head." Can we imagine Cousin Feenix, even in his hot youth, thus addressing a wicked uncle?

That part of the middle classes which I have been trying to analyse was the serious, Dissenting, Liberal-Radical or Reforming part, the part which was discontented and uneasy, which had hoped much from Reform and had not found all its hopes fulfilled. I do not mean to say that all Reformers were Dissenters, nor that all middle-class men admired only their own class. The Reformer Dickens made a mock of Dissenting Ministers; he was attached to the Church of England, praised its "discipline," and left it only for a short time (when he joined a Unitarian congregation) because he took offence at a want of Church enthusiasm for his Ragged Schools. The class he loved was the lower class. But, nevertheless, this part of the middle classes was unanimous in opposing and despising the old Feudalism.

On the other side of our vertical line was a part of the middle classes which was probably much bigger, though less vocal and self-expressive, than the Radical-Dissenting-Reforming part. This part was socially superior to the other part, was neither contumacious nor discontented, was on the contrary "deferential"—to use Bagehot's expression, was patriotic in a sense which a later generation called "Jingo," had the attributes of solidity and stolidity generally associated with John Bull, and included a great many specimens of "the fat man in a white hat in the twopenny omnibus."

In their politics these middle-class men were Conservative, or, at the least, Palmerstonian; they were strong in the City of London. In the Early Victorian period the politics of the City were Liberal, following Roundhead and Whig traditions of the train-bands and Wilkes and

Beckford. But, though Liberal, the City contained an institution of an essentially Conservative character — the Corporation of London; and there was more of the archaic than of the subversive in the rule of the City Companies. The educated Englishman, said Bagehot, connected the Corporation of London "with hereditary abuses perfectly preserved, with large revenues imperfectly accounted for, with a system which stops the principal City government at an old archway, with the perpetuation of a hundred detestable parishes, with the maintenance of a horde of luxurious and useless bodies. . . . Yet the Corporation of London was for centuries a bulwark of English liberty." Disraeli dined at Stationers' Hall (1845) "with thirty or forty citizens, grubbing like boys at a table of delicacies. . . . Most present were of the time of the first red sandstone, and before Mercury or Venus were created." Great has always been the hospitality of the City; it is the home not of lean conspirators, but of

"Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o' nights."

For its feasting and drinking it was the butt of Mr Punch, as also for the alleged vulgarity and illiteracy of its Mayors and Aldermen. I do not know if a City Alderman as late as the year 1864 could really have been so ill-educated as Alderman Wugsby (*Punch*, 19th November 1864), who rehearses a speech welcoming to the Guildhall the eminent French advocate M. Berryer:

"Your royal 'Ighnesses, Mister Berier, and Gentlemen, it is with the greatest pleasure as I rise to respond to the toast of the 'onourable Corporation of our ancient City, which you 'ave done us the H-Honour of drinking! When I looks around me and sees the many emanent pussonages of our nobility, gentry, and others, and you, Mister Berier, a sittin' there," etc. I rather suspect that Mr Punch accentuated these failings, because he thought that the Corporation needed reform. Anyhow the City business man had Conservative leanings; if he sought relaxation

ENCOURAGEMENT

Adjutant: "Fall in; and let me see a little of that 'Superior Intelligence' we hear so much about."

The Volunteers (inaugurated in 1859) were recruited from the middle classes. At first they were not all models of smartness & in spite of their patriotism were greatly underrated by the public.

(*See p.* 92)

from business, he did not go to hear political harangues, but found it — like the famous Mr Briggs — in various forms of sport, which he pursued with more pluck and perseverance than success.

There was nothing of Bright's internationalism or pro-Americanism about this part of the middle classes. In foreign politics they followed Palmerston, who (as his biographer claims) "believed in England as the best and greatest country in the world." It was essentially to them that Palmerston appealed in his great Don Pacifico speech:

"As the Roman in the days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say '*Civis Romanus Sum*,' so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong."

It was this part of the middle classes that wanted the Crimean War. "The British Philistine and his newspapers," says Arminius (in *Friendship's Garland*), "have the whole credit of it"; and throughout the vicissitudes of the war they were extraordinarily steadfast, and kept Ministers to their duty. "I can fancy how I should be hooted in the House of Commons," said Palmerston—of the proposal that the Black Sea should be the subject of a separate treaty between Turkey and Russia. Palmerston could regard the pacifists as negligible: "I cannot reckon Bright, Cobden and Co. for anything." Arminius asserted that the Philistines had the credit—or discredit—of the Peace as well as of the War. But it was the diplomatists that made the Peace, and the Philistines were in fact dissatisfied with it. "Peace was proclaimed this morning by the Heralds," wrote Granville to Canning (29th April 1856), "it was slightly cheered at St James's and hissed at Temple Bar." It was argued in the time of the Reform Bill that only an aristocracy could persevere through the trials of a great war. The middle classes disproved this in the Crimean War, and the working classes in our own Great War. And in their enthusiasm for the Crimean War the middle classes had the Queen with them. "The Queen," say the

editors of her *Letters*, "by a providential gift of temperament, thoroughly understood the middle-class point of view." They are here referring especially to "common sense and family affection," but in nothing did she more identify herself with middle-class sentiment than in its anti-Russian prejudices. Twenty years later she greatly embarrassed Lord Beaconsfield by her passionate desire to make war on Russia again. In their anti-Russian sympathies the Queen and the middle classes reacted on one another, and both grew more extreme.

A year after the Peace an event happened which gave the middle classes another opportunity of proving their patriotism—of which they took advantage, with important consequences to the country. At Paris bombs were thrown at the Emperor's carriage, and Felice Orsini, with others, was executed for the attempted assassination. But the bombs were made in England, and certain French colonels denounced our country as "the protector of assassins" and "the infamous haunt in which such infernal machines were planned." These expressions having been published in a French official newspaper, there were fears of war with our recent ally, and a scare about invasion. A Volunteer Force was organized. The "painful misconceptions" yielded to diplomacy, but the Volunteer Force remained.

The forming of the Volunteer Force was a middle-class movement. The officers were generally of the upper middle class, professional or business men, from a social stratum different from that of Yeomanry or Militia officers; the non-commissioned officers and men were also of the middle class. And the existence of the force undoubtedly improved the morale of the middle classes. "Far from being a measure dangerous by its *arming the people*," wrote Matthew Arnold, who was then serving in the Queen's Westminsters, "a danger to which some persons are very sensitive, it seems to me that the establishment of these Rifle Corps will more than ever throw the power into the hands of the upper and middle classes, as it is of these that they are mainly composed, and these classes will thus have over the lower classes

the superiority, not only of wealth and of intelligence, which they have now, but of physical force." [18] The new army was sniffed at by the "intellectuals," and from other quarters soon received a measure of contempt and ridicule. Jowett writes about Oxford undergraduates (1860) to Tennyson's children: "They are very busy playing at soldiers at present; in fact they can hardly be got to do anything else. But they are good boys and I like them very much." "Few people took them [the Volunteers] seriously or believed that they would fight Napoleon or anybody else . . . they lived in an atmosphere of popular, or rather lower-class, ridicule, but they lived it down," says a recent chronicler of the period.[19] *Punch* (7th December 1861) shows a Volunteer band marching through a quiet street at midnight, "drumming and trumpeting like savages"; some of the bandsmen are drunk. Mr Punch, I think, always kept a warm corner in his heart for the Volunteers,[20] but he continued to make sport of them—even after the Boer War, in which they "made good" by sending companies to fight alongside their Regular battalions. He also imputed snobbishness. Private Tufton (*Punch*, 12th March 1864), drawn as a little old stout gentleman, worries his Captain to present him to his Colonel, Lord Kilcovey, and, on being introduced as "No. 450 Second Battalion," feels affronted and resigns from the corps. Matthew Arnold makes the same accusation (in the letter just quoted): "The bad feature in the proceeding is the hideous English toadyism with which lords and great people are invested with the commands in the corps they join, quite without respect of any consideration of their efficiency. This proceeds from our national bane—the immense vulgar-mindedness and, so far, real inferiority of the English middle classes." At one of these nobly born commanders he has a fling in *Friendship's Garland*; he takes Arminius to Wimbledon "to see the shooting; and there, walking up and down before the grand tent, was Lord Elcho. Everybody knows Lord Elcho's appearance, and how admirably he looks the part of our governing classes; to my mind, indeed, the mere cock of his Lordship's

hat is one of the finest and most aristocratic things we have. So of course I pointed Lord Elcho out to Arminius." Why did Matthew Arnold make merry over that enthusiastic volunteer Lord Elcho (afterwards better known as Lord Wemyss)? Can it be that Colonel Lord Elcho had had occasion to "tell off" Private Matthew Arnold for some military misdemeanour? But the Volunteer regiments owed much to being commanded by men of acknowledged position, who were probably more bored than gratified by their promotion and their duties; some of them were Crimean veterans and knew the prime necessity of discipline. For discipline was the Volunteer's weak point, and the Adjutant who (*Punch*, 14th December 1861) addressed a top-hatted and frock-coated but very "awkward" squad, "Fall in; and let me see a little more of that 'Superior Intelligence' we hear so much about," probably had it in mind that even superior intelligence without discipline was nothing worth. Still the lesson of discipline was *taught*, and, so far as it was *learnt*, the middle-class Volunteer was being trained to one of Burke's virtues of "a true natural aristocracy"—"to be habituated in armies to command and obey." From the Volunteers in due time was born the Territorial Force, and what would England have done without her Territorial Army and its organization in the Great War? By their enthusiasm for voluntary soldiering the middle classes deserved well of their country.

The reverse and less admirable side of middle-class patriotism was its insularity and conceit, or, as Cobden described it, "the pugnacious, energetic, self-sufficient, foreigner-despising and pitying character of the noble insular creature John Bull." "Damn all foreign countries!" said an Oxfordshire free-holder to Gladstone in the election of 1831; "what has England to do with foreign countries?" In the eighteenth century we had heartily despised the foreigner; in Hogarth's picture *Roast Beef at the Gate of Calais* the Frenchman is depicted as a meagre, underfed fellow. But Waterloo accentuated this contempt, and the Early Victorian still enjoyed the prestige of Waterloo. He

was of a nation that had "licked Boney," who had "licked" the rest of Europe. Our national poet voiced this sentiment, and stamped it with the seal of his office. We were the nation

> "Whom the roar of Hougoumont
> Left mightiest of all people under Heaven."
>
> "No little German state are we,
> But the one voice of Europe." [21]

Palmerston, the idol of the middle classes, spoke to the same effect in his famous speech :

"We have shown the example of a nation, in which every class of society accepts with cheerfulness the lot which Providence has assigned to it, while at the same time every individual of each class is constantly striving to raise himself in the social scale—not by injustice and wrong, not by violence and illegality, but by persevering good conduct, and by the steady and energetic exertion of the moral and intellectual faculties with which his Creator has endowed him."

Thus encouraged, the nation formed itself into a sort of mutual-admiration society. Lord Derby described the orderly procession of the Duke of Wellington's funeral as "a lesson to foreigners." Lord Odo Russell in the same spirit of superiority lectured no less a personage than the Pope :

"We derive great happiness from our free institutions, and we would be glad to see our neighbours in Europe as happy and as prosperous as we are." [22] This is exactly the same tone as upper-middle-class Mr Podsnap adopted to his French guest :

"We Englishmen are Very Proud of our Constitution, Sir. It Was Bestowed Upon Us By Providence. No Other Country is so Favoured as This Country. . . ." "It was a little particular of Providence," said the foreign gentleman, "for the frontier is not large."

Mr Punch, the copious and appreciative illustrator, and

sometimes the satirist, of the middle classes, flatters his readers by suggesting that at any rate they are *cleaner* than foreigners. He shows us at the Great Exhibition three Frenchmen, dirty, bearded and unshaven, standing in amazement before a washstand. "Comment appelle-t-on cette Machine-la?" "Tiens, c'est drole, mais je ne sais pas." "I have observed in my travels," writes Matthew Arnold, "that most young gentlemen of our highest class go through Europe, from Calais to Constantinople, with one sentence on their lips, and one idea in their minds, which suffices, apparently, to explain all that they see to them: *Foreigners don't wash.*" Mr Punch (2nd January 1858) wrote an essay upon his travelling fellow-countrymen with the sarcastic heading, *Why Englishmen are so beloved upon the Continent*, and gave as one of many reasons that "whatever grievance they may fancy they have sustained, they never more than twenty times *per diem* swear Lord Palmerston shall hear of it." Another reason for our unpopularity abroad is suggested (*Punch*, 3rd July 1869) by the provincial tourist's chaff of the waiter who offered him sausages: "I say, old Feller, any 'osses died about 'ere lately?" But Mr Punch himself showed symptoms of Podsnappery when he published Tenniel's cartoon (*At Home and Abroad*, 7th March 1863) for the Prince of Wales's marriage. The happy pair are drawn along in triumph, while in the background are sketched scenes proving the miserable condition of almost every nation in the world but our own—the United States, Italy, France, Poland, Prussia, Russia, Greece. Very lordly, too, is Mr Punch's contempt for the infant German fleet. He is seen offering a small German a toy-ship, and saying: "There's a ship for you, my little man—now cut away and don't get in a mess" (19th October 1861). Or the British tar points over his shoulder at the German tar, who is certainly more like a German professor than a seaman: "Blow it, Bill!" he tells his mate, "we can't be expected to *fight* a lot of lubberly swabs like him. We'll *kick* 'em, if that'll do" (2nd July 1864). In the same spirit Lord John Russell wrote to Granville

THE GERMAN FLEET

Mr. Punch (to small German): "There's a ship for you, my little man—now cut away, and don't get in a mess."

This cartoon (1861) shows the universal contempt felt for the German Fleet which was shared & expressed by eminent statesmen & tended to embitter the relations between the two countries.

(*See p.* 94)

in 1865: "Bismarck is very amusing with his baby fleet"; but Granville was wiser, and had been justly alarmed at the "lightness of heart" with which Palmerston had threatened Germany in the Danish crisis of 1864. Six years later Germany was to give terrible proofs of her might, and one great English writer gloried in her triumph. "Germany, from of old," wrote Carlyle to Froude, in September 1870, "has been the peaceablest, most pious, and in the end most valiant and terriblest of nations. Germany ought to be President of Europe, and will again, it seems, be tried with that office for another five centuries or so." *Heu vatum ignaræ mentes!*

All ranks of travelling Englishmen were apt to show their contempt of the foreigner, and to be ill-mannered towards him. In 1826 Sydney Smith at the Paris Opera noticed that "the house was full of English, who talked loud, and seemed to care little for other people. This is their characteristic, and a very brutal and barbarous distinction it is." This was the behaviour of the conqueror; but religious conviction confirmed the nation in its sense of superiority. Like the Jews of the Old Testament, we were the chosen people of God. "The safety of the English people," said Lord Shaftesbury, "is the special care of Providence." Lord Shaftesbury was a patrician, but great masses of the middle classes looked to him as their leader, for, while he nobly and untiringly guided their philanthropic and humanitarian impulses, he faithfully reflected their puritanism and narrowness of outlook.

Against the middle classes as a whole, insularity (or provincialism) and materialism are the two principal faults alleged by contemporary writers. "The provincial narrowness and vulgarity of its middle class" is a phrase from Matthew Arnold's *Letters*, and Bagehot, I think, has the middle classes specially in view when he asks: "Are they not [the English] above all nations divided from the rest of the world, insular both in situation and in mind, both for good and for evil? Are they not out of the current of

common European causes and affairs ? Are they not a race contemptuous of others ? Are they not a race with no special education or culture as to the modern world, and too often despising such culture ? " *Penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos !* And the Nonconformist was an *insula in insulâ.* As compared with a Churchman, he was as an ordinary Englishman to a cultivated European. " The Nonconformist," says Arnold in his *Preface* to *Culture and Anarchy,* " is not in contact with the main current of national life like the member of an Establishment." " The Nonconformists have got provincialism and lost totality by the want of a religious establishment." America, also devoid of such establishments, is " touched with that provincialism which it is our aim to extirpate in the English Nonconformists." " The great thing is," he writes to Mrs Arnold, " to drag the dissenting middle class into the great public arena of life and discussion, and not let it remain in its isolation."

It is against the selfish materialism or " mammonism " of the business man rather than his want of culture that Carlyle is fond of inveighing. " A man of business, deny him not thy praise—thy pity." " And now what is it, if you pierce through his cants, his oft-repeated Hearsays, what he calls his Worships and so forth,—what is it that the modern English soul does, in very truth, dread infinitely, and contemplate with entire despair ? What *is* his hell, after all these reputable, oft-repeated Hearsays, what is it ? With hesitation, with astonishment, I pronounce it to be : The terror of ' Not succeeding ' ; of not making money, fame, or some other figure in the world,—chiefly of not making money ! Is not that a somewhat singular hell ? " Success is everything, and the striver consistently and daily applies the rule that Matthew Arnold called " Mrs Gooch's Golden Rule, or the Divine Injunction ' Be Ye Perfect ' done into British,—the sentence Sir Daniel Gooch's mother repeated to him every morning when he was a boy going to work : ' *Ever remember, my dear Dan, that you should look forward to being some day manager of that concern.*' "

In the enormous expansion of so many "concerns" that marked those years of transition there were great chances open for brains and diligence. Many deservedly succeeded; but the danger some fell into was to imagine that the successful man *must* deserve his success—that God prospered him in all his undertakings, as he prospered the chosen British nation. "I am glad," said John Bright, "when matters of business go straight with matters of high morality." It would not have sounded so well had he said: "I am glad of occasions when it is possible to make the best of both worlds." Mr Tittlebat Titmouse (in *Ten Thousand a Year*) very opportunely reminded the Whig Lord Dreddlington that success in trade was not invariably the reward of merit. "But, Sir," said Lord Dreddlington, "the mercantile interests of this great country are not to be overlooked. Those who are concerned in them are frequently respectable persons." "Begging pardon, my Lord, no, they a'nt—if your Lordship only knew them as well as I do, my Lord. Most uncommon low people."

The middle classes had no definite boundaries. The upper part of them, indeed, was still fairly distinct from the old ruling class; it was still quite easy to decide whether a person was, or was not, a person of birth and family. But the lower part faded off imperceptibly, and inextricably, into the working classes. Some of the more wealthy struggled to ascend into the upper class by marriage or the purchase of an estate. "The great [Manchester] merchants," says Mr Trevelyan in his *Life of John Bright* (referring to the year 1857), "became more conservative and more closely bound by social ties to the landed magnates who had so lately been their bitterest foes." "The sons of weavers," wrote John Morley sarcastically in *The Fortnightly Review* (December 1868), "are hunting up genealogies and spreading their wings for sublime apotheosis among the county families." So there was no cohesion in the middle classes; they did not act "in corps"; they had no common interest, except to avoid being again subject to the upper class, and being

swamped by the lower. It is worth while to reflect that though England knew an aristocratic Government for generations, and has lately known a Government by the working classes, she has never had—and never will have—a purely middle-class Government in power. Bagehot puts the case well, and he was writing in 1867—thirty-five years after the passing of the Reform Bill :

" In number the landed gentry in the House far surpass any other class. They have, too, a more intimate connexion with one another ; they were educated at the same school ; knew one another's family name from boyhood ; form a society ; are the same kind of men ; marry the same kind of women. The merchants and manufacturers in Parliament are a motley race—one educated here, another there, a third not educated at all ; some are of the second generation of traders, who consider self-made men intruders upon an hereditary place ; others are self-made, and regard the men of inherited wealth, which they did not make and do not augment, as beings of neither mind nor place, inferior to themselves because they have no brains, and inferior to Lords because they have no rank. Traders have no bond of union, no habits of intercourse ; their wives, if they care for society, want to see the wives not of other such men, but 'better people,' as they say—the wives of men certainly with land, and, if heaven help, with the titles."

" The Barings want connexion," wrote Miss Emily Eden in 1829.[23] Wanting social " connexion " a man was " out of it," and found political " connexion " almost impossible. Mr Dombey was " out of it," but Cousin Feenix was " in it." With characteristic courtesy the latter assumed that the person to whom he was talking—whether it were Dombey or the obscure Walter Gay—would be acquainted with " Jack Adams," " Little Billy Joper," " Long Saxby," " Lady Jane Finchbury—woman with tight stays," " The Smalder girls," " Foley on a blood mare," " Tom Johnson —man with cork leg from White's," " Tommy Screwger—a man of an extremely bilious habit," and " Conversation Brown—four-bottle man at the Treasury Board." But

these personages lived in a world of their own—a world of the club and the boudoir, of gossip and intrigue—a world as familiar to Cousin Feenix as it had been to Horace Walpole, but a *terra incognita* to Mr Dombey.

" Testy, absolute, ill-acquainted with foreign matters, a little ignoble, very dull to perceive when it is making itself ridiculous." These, according to middle-class Matthew Arnold, were the faults of a rich middle class. He is sarcastic about " the strong middle part of England—England happy, as Mr Lowe, quoting Aristotle, says, in having her middle part strong and her extremes weak." What can be said on the other side ? Well, Arnold himself admits that the middle classes were laborious, and that even his own university might benefit by their example—" Perhaps the infusion of Dissenters' sons of that muscular, hard-working, *unblasé* middle class—for it is this, in spite of its abominable disagreeableness—may brace the flaccid sinews of Oxford a little." " There is endless hope in work," said Carlyle, " were it even work at making money." Then (*pace* Mr Tittlebat Titmouse) they had the character of being honourable in their commercial dealings ; and, as we have seen, were staunch in their patriotism. They were also law-abiding. Kenelm Digby, whom Lord John Manners so much admired, said that " in society, as in the atmosphere of the world, it is the middle which is the region of disorder and confusion and tempest." This has certainly never been true of English society. It may be that, as in ethics the doctrine of virtue being a mean is wanting in elevation, so in politics the virtues of the middle classes have generally proved to be of a negative character. Yet in Political Philosophy Aristotle is an authority " from whose opinion " (as Johnson would say) " it will appear not very safe to depart " ; and of the middle classes Aristotle has written :

" For this is the condition in which obedience to reason is easiest ; whereas one who is excessively beautiful, strong, noble or wealthy, or, on the contrary, excessively poor or weak or deeply degraded, cannot easily live a life conformable to reason. Such persons are apt, in the first case, to be

guilty of insolence and criminality on a large scale, and in the second to become rogues or petty criminals."

"It is a State of this kind—viz. composed largely of the middle class—which enjoys the best political constitution."

"It is clear then that the best political association is one which is controlled by the middle class, and that the only States capable of a good administration are those in which the middle class is numerically large and stronger, if not than both the other classes, yet at least than either of them."

"For it is where the middle class is large that there is the least danger of disturbances and dissensions among the citizens." [24]

NOTES

[1] Disraeli said of the nabob: "Riding on elephants, surrounded by slaves, he is always dreaming of Quarter Sessions."

[2] *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, p. 287.

[3] He had supported the Bill in 1831 on the ground that the aristocracy would be strengthened by a class "opposed to revolutionary changes by all the habits of commerce and all the instincts of wealth."

[4] *Life of Disraeli* (Monypenny), vol. ii., p. 76.

[5] A letter headed "Voice of the Omnibus," addressed to Lord Palmerston and signed by Mr Punch himself, attacked the Government for "incredible imbecility, incompetence and mismanagement" in the conduct of the Crimean War. "Remember I don't go beyond the omnibuses," says the writer, "I speak for the omnibuses—*and the omnibuses have votes*" (*Punch* (1855), vol. xxviii., p. 179).

[6] John Bright in the House of Commons once ventured on a classical quotation—"crinis disjectis!"

[7] *Life of Disraeli* (Monypenny), vol. ii., p. 104.

[8] *Speech in House of Commons on the Crime and Outrage Bill* (1847).

[9] *Coningsby*, chap. vi.

[10] *Sybil*, chap. xii.

[11] If we may believe Sir William Hardman, Thackeray himself was fond of a "broad" story (*Letters and Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 184).

[12] *George Eliot and her Times* (Elizabeth S. Haldane), p. 137.

[13] *Tennyson* (Harold Nicolson). *Tennyson, a Modern Portrait* (Hugh I'Anson Fausset).

[14] *W. H. Smith* (*The Times*, 24th June 1925).

[15] Thomas Bowdler (1754-1825) published *The Family Shakespeare*, which omitted "those words and expressions which cannot with propriety be read aloud in a family." He also reprinted Gibbon's

Decline and Fall, " with the careful omission of all passages of an irreligious or immoral tendency." Readers of *Our Mutual Friend* will remember Mr Silas Wegg's delicacy in reading *The Decline and Fall* aloud to Mr and Mrs Boffin, and that there were certain explanations which could be given only " when Mrs Boffin does not honour us with her company." Swinburne (says Mr Harold Nicolson) arrived at Eton " hugging a huge volume of Bowdler's *Shakespeare*."

[16] Disraeli called it " a just but unnecessary war." Both Cobden and Bright thought that Derby would have avoided it, had he been in office.

[17] We must remember that Melbourne thought that " the final separation of these Colonies might possibly not be a material detriment to the interests of the mother country," though it would be a blow to her honour. Lord Aberdeen wished we could get rid of Gibraltar—" it is not a practical question, for no Minister could surrender it." As late as 1866 Disraeli spoke of " colonial deadweights."

[18] *Letter to Miss Arnold*, 21st November 1859.

[19] *London and Londoners in the 1850's and 1860's* (A. R. Bennett, p. 41).

[20] See a very friendly cartoon by Linley Sambourne, 11th April 1891.

[21] But after the Franco-German War Tennyson admitted: " We rashly expose ourselves to danger, and in our Press offend Foreign Powers, being the most beastly self-satisfied nation in the world " (*Tennyson, A Modern Portrait* (Hugh I'Anson Fausset), p. 253).

[22] See *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vol. iii., p. 557.

[23] They have since been granted four peerages, and have no doubt achieved " connexion."

[24] From Bishop Welldon's translation of the *Politics*.

IV

THE SURVIVAL OF ARISTOCRACY

The Eighteenth-Century Peer—Whig Power after 1832—Luxury survives—Social Prestige in Country—Aristocracy & Field Sports—Snobbery—Satirized by Thackeray, Disraeli, Surtees, Dickens, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, *Punch*—Snobbery a Disease of the Transition Period—Political Hostesses & Snobs—Political Prestige of Aristocracy—Aristocratic Cabinets—Disraeli's Social Position—Power of Landed Interest—Repeal of Corn Laws affects Land—Peel's Drainage Act—Land still prosperous—Land after Reform Act, 1867—Gladstone's Attitude to Land—The Great Duke—Gladstone & Newcastle—Dickens on Pocket-Boroughs—Corruption of Voters—Survival of Duelling—The Last Duel in England—The Prince Consort opposes Duelling

SINCE the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth England has suffered two revolutions. The event of 1688 changed the dynasty and gave the governing power to an oligarchy. The event of 1832, of which Lyndhurst said that it was much more a revolution than that of 1688, transferred power—or a share thereof—to the middle classes. Both revolutions may be called bloodless, though the former was followed in due time by two rebellions which had to be crushed before the hopes of the old dynasty were finally extinguished. And of both revolutions the ostensible leaders were aristocrats.

Very paramount were our aristocrats in the eighteenth century. It was exceptional for a commoner to be found in the Cabinet. In 1733 it was thought extraordinary that Walpole should make Sir Charles Wager First Lord of the Admiralty ; in Walpole's last Cabinet Wager and himself were the only commoners. In Pelham's Cabinet there was only one commoner—Pelham ; in North's Cabinet (1770) there were two—North and Sir Edward Hawke ; in the

younger Pitt's first Cabinet, only Pitt. In the fifty years of Whig ascendancy which began with the accession of George the First a Whig duke would have considered himself as entitled to Cabinet rank (if he sought it) by an almost prescriptive right. Newcastle held the doctrine that high rank and great estates excused incompetence in a Minister:

"They might have great titles, great estates, great property, great zeal to serve whoever was in power: nay, some—I won't say all—may, with very little sense, have great integrity and good character; and such men it may be very proper for a Government to employ in offices where sense is not much wanted." [1]

Newcastle's notion seems odd to us, but it was a survival from the time when the great lords could put armies of retainers in the field, and when it was more important to enlist the services of one who could collect "forces" than to secure the support of a powerful debater. There was a time when men with territorial possessions were the only mainstay of King or Minister.

So, even after 1832, there was an expectation in some quarters that aristocratic government would continue, for the Whig system was extremely aristocratic, and surely the Whigs (who had carried the Bill) would be "in" for a generation. And true it is that for a generation aristocratic government did endure—Whig-aristocratic—except for Peel's Ministry, and the Coalition of 1852, and Derby's three short periods of office. But the underlying conditions were different. The motive of the revolution of 1832 was not hate of a tyrant; its real promoters were not "republicans" but democrats: it drew its real strength from the other side of the Channel—from the Rights of Man, from "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"—in fact, from the French Revolution. The Whigs continued to govern, for the new men were as yet ignorant of the art; but the legislative impulse came from the Radicals. The doom of aristocracy had been pronounced, though the execution was deferred. "The Reform Act of 1832" (wrote Bagehot) "did not for many years disclose its real consequences";

but Disraeli also was right—"The moment the Lords passed the Reform Bill, from menace instead of conviction, the aristocratic principle of government in this country expired for ever."

In principle the "Right Divine" of aristocracy was dead, but the aristocrat continued to be very much alive. At the French Revolution the nobles were carried in batches to the guillotine; after our Reform-Bill Revolution our magnates saved not only their heads but their rank and their wealth. They lost their pocket-boroughs and their nominee Members of Parliament, and, in consequence, their hold over the House of Commons. But they kept their castles and London palaces, their yachts and country-houses, their deer forests and hunting-boxes, and the racing stables where they trained their horses for "that paramount and Olympian stake." Nor was there any diminution of splendour and expense. Paxton took four years in building, for the sixth Duke of Devonshire, that wonderful conservatory, the harbinger of the Crystal Palace, which the present Duke has found it economical to blow to pieces. Queen Victoria admired it—"one mass of glass, 64 feet high, 300 long and 134 wide"—and it was quite in keeping with the grandiose life at Chatsworth. This was "to the last degree uncomfortable," wrote Greville, in 1848. "On the other hand nothing could be more stately and grand than the whole affair and mode of life." "Seneschals and gentlemen-ushers, ladies-in-waiting and pages of the presence" (we have it from G. W. E. Russell, whose authority should be sufficient), "adorned noble as well as royal households." Lord Ellesmere's barge on the Bridgewater Canal (1845) was "drawn by two horses and two postillions in livery, who draw along a good pace, all the barges being obliged to *baisser pavillon* and make way for that of the lord of the canal." Billy Pringle (in *Ask Mamma*) writes to his mother from Lord Ladythorne's seat, Tantivy Castle: "There are always at least half-a-dozen footmen in cerulean blue lined with rose-coloured silk, and pink silk stockings, the whole profusely illustrated with gold lace, gold aiguillettes, and

I don't know what, lounging about the halls and passages." It may be remarked that the very notepaper on which Billy wrote bore a picture of Ladythorne's castle. Lord Ernest Hamilton tells us (in *Forty Years On*) that, as late as the "eighties," footmen were specially arrayed for dinner-parties in "gorgeous pink uniforms, silver epaulettes, heavy silver aiguillettes, white stockings and powdered hair."

The social prestige of the nobleman was as great as ever, and in the country had wide ramifications. In town were, doubtless, many idle peers—like Lord Lorraine, who passed the time by "crossing from Brooks's to Boodle's, and from Boodle's to Brooks's"; but in the country there were duties to be done. The rural life was a life of routine and lacking in excitement. "A great part of the 'best' English people," wrote Bagehot, "keep their minds in a state of decorous dullness." The Agramonts, for example, in *Lothair*, "always marry their cousins. His father did the same thing. They are so shy. It is a family that never was in society, and never will be. I was at Agramont Castle once, when I was at college. I shall never forget it. We used to sit down forty or fifty every day to dinner, entirely maiden aunts and clergymen, and that sort of thing." The very number of these guests indicates an enormous household and a horde of outside dependents. Conversation was limited, and its topics in the "sixties" are enumerated in *Forty Years On*—"Although health and the weather were generally recognized as suitable objects for dinner-table talk, at moments when conversation was flagging, undoubtedly the most popular subject for discussion was food, for whereas in the former case Society merely passed on the views of the doctor or the gardener, on the question of food it could air first-hand opinions." In *The Book of Snobs* some other topics are mentioned, all devoid of interest to Mr Snob the Londoner, but pointing to the conclusion that his country hosts were immersed in rural affairs—"And I remember the conversations. O Madam, Madam, how stupid they were! The sub-soil and ploughing; the pheasants and poaching; the row about the representation

of the County; the Earl of Mangelwurzelshire being at variance with his relative and nominee, the Honourable Marmaduke Tomnoddy: all these I could put down had I a mind to violate the confidence of private life; and a great deal of conversation about the weather; the Mangelwurzelshire Hunt, the new manures, and eating and drinking of course." (The wits of the eighteenth century, Johnson and Addison in particular, made very similar reflections on the conversation of country folk; like Thackeray, they were Cockneys.) Lord Granville met a lady at Woburn who "pretends to have a siesta after dinner in her own room, but she told me it was all a pretence to avoid the extreme dullness of the early part of the evening." St Aldegonde said: "Society in London is bad, but Society in the country is infernal." But, for all that, many of the greatest landowners, and still more of the lesser local magnates, preferred to live in the country—*adscripti glebæ* was Disraeli's name for them. Let us not forget that, by living in the country, they maintained great—and generally well-merited—social influence.

For a peer was still a peer. Mr Gazebee (in *The Small House at Allington*) knew the worthlessness of Lord de Courcy, "but as an Earl he was entitled to an amount of service which no commoner could have commanded from Mr Gazebee." The bailiffs at Framley Parsonage ceased their operations at the instance of Lord Lufton. "For the name of a lord," wrote Trollope, "is still great in England." And one reason why the name remained great was that the rural aristocracy excelled in sport and all manly exercises. "What I admire in the order to which you belong is that they do live in the air," said Mr Phœbus to Lothair, "that they excel in athletic sports, that they can only speak one language; and that they never read. This is not a complete education, but it is the highest education since the Greek." By sport they developed and maintained their physical vigour in the days when the men of the middle classes were still mewed up early and late in their offices and chambers, for hours of work were long, and the middle-class man had

not the modern opportunities of playing games, nor were cricket and football and rowing yet things of national importance. In sport also the upper classes and their womenkind showed a superior courage. Mr Punch is wont to exhibit the "Gent" on horseback as a coward. Mr Tootles "sees the Object of his Admiration flying over a Hog-Backed Stile," and dares not follow. Robinson is equally afraid to give Miss Selina Hardman a "lead" over a five-barred gate. It is precisely on this point of sport that Peel showed himself out of touch with the "Country" party. As a young man he offended Lady Shelley by speaking of shooting and country pursuits in a condescending manner. In the crisis of December 1845 he writes to Lady Peel with angry contempt for his old supporters, the Squires: "How can those who spend their time in hunting and shooting and eating and drinking know what were the motives of those who are responsible for the public safety?" Disraeli, in spite of his Jewish origin, had a better sympathy with the country gentleman.

In the South and West of England, and wherever industrial conditions had not changed the face of the country, it was very certain that wherever a large landowner lived a great part of the year on his estates, and took pains to associate himself with local life, his social influence might be enormous. He could dispense hospitality to all and sundry; at the covert-side and at the agricultural show he could take the lead. "The proudest moment of my life," said the eighth Duke of Devonshire, "was when my pig won the first prize at Skipton Fair." Of course there were regions where this influence did not extend; for, as there were "Two Nations" in England, so were there two countries. Cobden said of country gentlemen: "The towns of Lancashire were more unfamiliar to them in those days than Denver or Omaha in our own." But the rural Englishman, in spite of Reform, preserved his attachment to the old customs and the old families. Palmerston pleasantly harped upon this conservatism in an address to the electors of Tiverton (1852): "Well, what is the sign of that inn?

It is ' The Old Hats.' Not that anyone was thought to prefer an old hat to a new one, but it was expected that gentlemen would come to ' The Old Hats ' in preference to ' The New Hats.' Now a rival inn was set up, and what was its sign ? Why, ' The Old Old Hats ' " (*Loud laughter*), " and much it profited by that superlative design ! " He might have summed up his argument by one line of Æschylus :

" ἀρχαιοπλούτων δεσποτῶν πολλὴ χάρις "

The prevalence of Snobbery, that characteristic and notorious vice of the Victorians, is strong evidence of the undiminished social sway of the upper classes. Some may rate Snobbery as no more than a foible, but it was a foible that led its practisers into all extremes of baseness and folly and ingratitude. However, it does not concern us here to appraise its heinousness, nor to decide whether Thackeray himself was a Snob, and, if so, whether this was because he came of an Anglo-Indian family—" of people who " (says Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch), " commanding many servants, supported the English tradition of rule and dominance in a foreign land," and who were somewhat prone to Snobbery, because they were " dependent for all reward upon official recognition." I think this theory is rather far-fetched. Thackeray wrote for *Punch* some of the " Jenkins " papers against *The Morning Post*, a journal which, as the historian of *Punch* truly says, " adopted a tone towards Court and Society hardly in keeping with modern ideas of manly independence." Then he wrote *The Snobs of England*, which proved so popular that he had to continue writing about Snobs until he may have become infected with the very bacillus of which he had made too morbid a study. If Thackeray became a Snob, this seems to me to account for it. A well-known anecdote tells how " Jenkins " got his revenge, and, if true, shows that Thackeray liked being invited to great houses, and liked the world to know of his invitations.

It is more remarkable that such a chorus of contemporary

authors joined in this anti-Snobbery cry. We hear it in all Thackeray's novels of nineteenth-century life, and again and again in his Essays; for instance, in *Sketches and Travels*: "Every man of the Middle Class likes to know persons of rank. If he says he don't—don't believe him." Trollope's novels swarm with Snobs. In *The Small House at Allington* Adolphus Crosbie "had set himself down before the gates of the city of fashion, and had taken them by storm, or, perhaps, to speak with more propriety, he had picked the locks and let himself in." He jilted Lilian Dale for Lady Alexandrina de Courcy. "The air of Courcy was too much for him." "The single and simple ambition" of Mortimer Gazebee "had been that of being an Earl's son-in-law." We remember also in *Barchester Towers* the ambition of the Lookalofts, who converted Barleystubb Farm into "Rosebank," and how they forced their way into Miss Thorne's drawing-room. Disraeli neatly sums up the snobbish Mrs Putney Giles in *Lothair*: "Her lesser impulses were to become acquainted with the aristocracy, and be herself surrounded by celebrities." And in *Tancred*, having described how minutely Lord Montacute's movements were chronicled in Society papers, he makes this bitter comment: "It is only countries blessed with a free Press that can thus be favoured. Even a free Press is not alone sufficient. Besides a free Press, you must have a servile public." Surtees portrays many a rural "climber" in the world of sport. Dickens is more apt to dwell on the arrogance of the well-placed than the aspiring efforts of those in a lower position. Fashion, it is true, was Mr Weevle's "weakness," and his most cherished possession was "that truly national work, the Divinities of Albion, or Galaxy Gallery of British Beauty." But Mr Weevle and Mr Jobling were very humble spectators of this Gallery; in their case it was no more than the "desire of the moth for the star." Mr and Mrs Wititterley of Cadogan Place (in *Nicholas Nickleby*) are well-drawn Snobs. Mr Wititterley reminds his wife of "the night you danced with the Baronet's nephew at the Election Ball at Exeter," and when Sir

Mulberry Hawk and Lord Frederick Verisopht called, his feelings were "beyond the power of suppression." Dickens took an almost tragic view of Snobbery: "I really am serious in thinking" (he wrote in 1855) "that representative government is become altogether a failure with us, that the English gentilities and subserviences render the people unfit for it." Carlyle denounces "Valetism, the *reverse* of Heroism; sad root of all woes whatsoever." Matthew Arnold allows his fancy to play on Mr Bootles, who ascends socially to sit on the magisterial Bench with Lord Lumpington and the Reverend Esau Hittall, and sends his son to a public school. But there, we may hope, Bottles Junior breathed a salutary atmosphere, for—to quote Dickens again—"there is nowhere in the country so complete an absence of servility to mere rank, position, or riches." "At Eton," writes Thackeray, "a great deal of Snobbishness was thrashed out of Lord Buckram, and he was birched with perfect impartiality. . . . Young Bull licked him in a fight of fifty-five minutes, and he was caned several times with great advantage for not sufficiently polishing his master Smith's shoes." Needless to say that Mr Punch continued to present a rich variety of Snobs to his readers down to the time when Du Maurier made those fine studies, both literary and artistic, of Todeson and Sir Pompey Bedell and Mrs Ponsonby de Tomkyns and Cadby and Sir Gorgius Midas, characters quite after the tradition of Thackeray.

According to this cloud of witnesses Snobbery would seem to have been a disease, or epidemic, peculiar to this Transition period; in fact Thackeray himself declared that it was unknown five-and-twenty years before he wrote his *Snob Papers*. We cannot visualize a Snob in Tudor or in Elizabethan days.[2] Society was then too static, and to "climb" was very difficult, except in the rare case of a King's favourite. Great fortunes were made, but they were spent where they were made—"within the walls," as Steele would say. The same is almost as true of the eighteenth century. Deference to a patron was not Snobbery; it was

a genuine acknowledgment of inferiority. Nor is sheer vulgarity the same as Snobbery. The vulgar Branghton in *Evelina*, whose sayings amused Johnson so much, was what we should call a Cad rather than a Snob; he could not have been received by people of "quality" or "condition," even on the most contemptuous terms. The Snob has to be a more or less passable imitation of the real thing. "It is among the respectable, the Baker Street class," wrote Thackeray, "that Snobbishness flourishes, more than among any set of people in England."

What was there then about this period that was favourable to the propagation of Snobbery? It would be too fanciful to imagine that it was part of a Romantic or Reactionary movement, a sort of middle-class supplement to "Young Englandism," a protest against the social levelling—as the Oxford Movement was a protest against the irreligion—of Reform. Snobbery had no leaders (though it has had its martyrs), no organization, no intellectual nor political basis; it was a human instinct in an age of social fluidity.

And yet I suspect it of some connexion with the great transaction of 1832. A number of new men then entered the House of Commons, and the House of Commons has always been a social centre. Writing of London society in 1866, Mr G. M. Trevelyan (in his *Life of John Bright*) says: "The House of Commons was still almost as much the heart and centre as it had been in the days of the Walpoles." Most of these new men were Radicals, or Whig-Radicals, and they came to London without any superstitious respect for

> "degree, priority and place,
> Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
> Office and custom, in all line of order."

But, having arrived, they became susceptible to certain influences.

Lady St Julians remarks in *Sybil*:

"People get into Parliament to get on; . . . they are

asked out to dinner more than they would be ; they move rigmarole resolutions at nonsensical public meetings ; and they get invited with their women to assemblies at their leader's, where they see stars and blue ribbons, and above all, us, who, they little think, in appearing on such occasions, make the greatest conceivable sacrifice. Well then, of course such people are entirely in one's power, if one only had time and inclination to notice them. You can do anything with them. Ask them to a ball, and they will give you their votes ; invite them to dinner and, if necessary, they will rescind them ; but cultivate them, remember their wives at assemblies, and call their daughters, if possible, by their right names ; and they will not only change their principles or desert their party for you, but subscribe their fortunes, if necessary, and lay down their lives in your service."

This is the haughty, almost brutal, tone of one who understands Snobs—and uses them. Let us add the description of a real political hostess, which puts a pleasanter gloss on this process, but indicates that the process was certainly put into operation :

" Under these circumstances Lady Palmerston gave one of her parties—' a very good and brilliant affair,' as she described it. Who knows how many doubting hearts were won by these parties, distinguished by the kindness, the grace, the charm of the hostess and her beautiful daughters ? " [3] Much indeed could this devoted politician effect through " the influence of a gentle talk in the perfumed drawing-room of Cambridge House." At any rate Cobden, who knew his own class, writes of the " new " men in 1863 : " Feudalism is every day more and more in the ascendant in political and social life. . . . Manufacturers and merchants as a rule seem only to desire riches that they may be enabled to prostrate themselves at the feet of feudalism."

Snobs, wrote Thackeray, are " to be found in every rank of this mortal life," and he therefore includes aristocratic Snobs. *Their* Snobbishness consisted in an excess of

exclusiveness. This was in fact a defiant protest against Reform and all its consequences, political and social. There were persons who were determined not to be submerged by the rising tide. Lady Susan Scraper stuck to her house in the grand London square, whatever economies had to be practised. The Marchioness of Carabas, while crossing the Channel, remained on deck in her own chariot—"There she sits, and will be ill in private."

But the middle-class Snobs deserve our pity as much as our contempt. For, as religious man must find a God, so social and political man must find something to revere or respect; he must worship power or influence in one form or another. And the pathos of it was that the Snob still worshipped rank, being too stupid to realize that its days of power were numbered:

> "Of what avail art thou
> To help us now,
> Though dating from the Flood,
> Blue blood?"

The days of pure aristocratic government truly were numbered, but the number still left was considerable. For some time yet the old ruling class was to be left ostensibly, at any rate, in charge of national affairs. This was partly due to the "deferential" attitude of the "Ten-Pounders," who (as Bagehot remarked) "like to have an Honourable, or a Baronet, or, still better, an Irish Earl, to represent them in Parliament." And at first the dominance was real. After the Reform Act of 1867 there was a difference. Arminius, in *Friendship's Garland*, said of aristocracy: "But it no longer rules; at most it but administers; the Philistines rule." The biographers of nineteenth-century statesmen and politicians all dwell on this survival, whether of rule or superintendence. Thus in Lord Fitzmaurice's *Life of Lord Granville* [4] we read:

"The aristocracy, notwithstanding the Reform Bill, still continued to govern England, whether Conservatism disguised itself under a Liberal hood with Melbourne and

Palmerston, or Liberalism thought fit to figure as Conservatism under the *ægis* of the names of Peel and Aberdeen."

In Lord Lytton's *Life of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton*[5]:

"Though political representation in 1832 passed out of the hands of what had till then been a comparatively small governing class, *the machinery of government* still remained under their control."

In Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*[6] we find a vivid picture of London society in 1840:

"There he beheld the glitter of rank and station, and palaces, and men and women bearing famous names . . . so much of the governing force of England still gathered into a few great houses, exclusive and full of pride and yet, after the astounding discovery that, in spite of the challenge of the Reform Bill, they were still alive as the directing class, always so open to political genius."

The truth of these statements is proved by the simple fact that every Cabinet, from Lord Grey's Reform Bill administration to that of Disraeli in 1874, was wholly, or almost wholly, aristocratic. There was this advance from the eighteenth century—that it was not necessary to be a peer in order to be a Cabinet Minister, but "birth and connexion" were almost indispensable to Cabinet rank. For instance:

The Grey Cabinet of 1830 was composed entirely of aristocrats, and almost entirely of peers. Grey himself was an aristocrat of aristocrats. It was said of him that it was doubtful "whether the most unintellectual nobleman in the realm was not a far greater man in his estimation than Sir Walter Scott." The Cabinet he formed after the passing of the Bill was very little different: Goderich was substituted for Durham, and Stanley for Goderich.

Of Peel's Government (1834-1835) Greville writes: "He goes on the old aristocratic principle of taking high birth and connexion as substitutes for other qualifications."

The Cabinet of Melbourne, which followed, was aristocratic except for the inclusion of Poulett Thomson, to whose

"counting-house knowledge" Greville made a contemptuous reference.

Peel's Cabinet of 1842 was entirely aristocratic.

In the Russell Cabinet of 1846 the only non-aristocrat was Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, whose father was a partner in the great mercantile firm of Hope. "On the Treasury Bench," said Bright in 1848, "aristocracy reigns supreme."

In the Derby Cabinet of 1852, besides Disraeli, Herries and perhaps Henley were the only middle-class men. Henley was the son of a merchant who became a country gentleman, and whose estates Henley inherited. Disraeli himself, profiting by the Young England Movement, had made friends in influential quarters, and had thereby begun to get some support from the great houses, without which (says Mr Whibley, in his *Life of Lord John Manners*) in 1844 "no statesman could expect to triumph." In 1847 he discarded his "motley garments" on taking his seat upon the front Opposition bench, and dressed himself in sober black. In 1848 the purchase of Hughenden had made him a country squire [7]; he had by that time become, at first in effect, and next the acknowledged, leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons. But at the time of his onslaughts on Peel he was still regarded as a political bravo. "I hope Israeli's gun is loaded for a shot to-night," writes Lonsdale to Croker (15th June 1846). By 1853 "he is our only man" (Lonsdale to Croker, 12th December 1853). In 1858 Drake of Shardeloes, a Buckinghamshire magnate, asks Disraeli for a cadetship. "After thirty years of scorn and sullenness they have melted before time and events," was Disraeli's observation. But in 1866 Shaftesbury calls him "the leper," and a Conservative sums him up to Harcourt, in the metaphor of cricket: "We know he does not belong to our Eleven, but we have him down as a professional bowler." The Conservative team might certainly have waited long for their own innings without the aid of his bowling.

Of the Coalition Cabinet of 1852-1855 Gladstone himself said: "No Cabinet could have been more aristocratically

composed than that over which Lord Aberdeen presided. I myself was the only one, of fifteen noblemen and gentlemen who composed it, who could not fairly be said to belong to that class." Though Gladstone here disclaims for himself the advantages of "birth," he had by this time married the heiress of the Glynnes, and become related to many territorial families. The other fourteen members of this Cabinet were Aberdeen, Cranworth, Granville, Argyll, Palmerston, Russell, Newcastle, Graham, Wood, Herbert, Molesworth, Lansdowne, Clarendon and Grey. Gladstone put it to the credit of this patrician Cabinet that it approved a plan for competitive examinations for the Civil Service.

In the Palmerston Cabinet of 1855 we find aristocracy diluted only by Robert Vernon Smith (nephew of Sydney Smith, and afterwards Lord Lyveden), and Matthew Talbot Baines, whom Disraeli described as "a man of the people."

In the Derby Cabinet of 1858 there were, besides Disraeli, only Jonathan Peel (the brother of a Prime Minister) and Henley who could possibly be called middle-class. It was about this time that Cobden wrote: "During my experience, the higher classes never stood so high in relative social and political rank as compared with other classes as at present. The middle classes have been content with the very crumbs from their table."

Palmerston's Cabinet of 1859 was aristocratic, except for the admission of Cardwell, the son of a Liverpool merchant, and Milner-Gibson; Gladstone, of course, also was a member.

In the Russell Cabinet of 1865 we find, besides Gladstone and Milner-Gibson, G. J. Goschen, described by his colleague Clarendon as "a German Jew."

The Derby Cabinet of 1866 was aristocratic except for Disraeli and Jonathan Peel.

But in Gladstone's Cabinet of 1868 the middle-class men began to get a footing. Robert Lowe, John Bright and Goschen were original members; W. E. Forster was added in 1870, and Stansfeld in 1871.

Disraeli's Cabinet of 1874 was aristocratic except for R. A. Cross, and (1877) W. H. Smith. (In Disraeli's letters Cross is generally referred to as " Mr Secretary X.") [8]

In these discriminations I have not taken into account the Lord Chancellors, for *ex officio* they are peers. But by origin they have been generally middle-class men of outstanding ability. Of the nineteenth-century Chancellors, Truro was the son of an attorney, Sugden of a hairdresser, Chelmsford of a Collector of Customs, Westbury of a country doctor ; just as in the eighteenth century Macclesfield and Hardwicke were the sons of attorneys, and Thurlow the son of a clergyman. The highest position in the Law had always been more attainable by sheer character and ability than any other seat in the Cabinet. A Prime Minister might risk appointing a man of moderate ability to the Local Government Board, but for his Chancellor and Speaker of the House of Lords he was bound to choose a " first-class brain." This was why Disraeli dismissed Chelmsford and appointed Cairns in 1868.

Land continued to confer on its possessors social prestige and considerable political power. The Reform Bill did not directly affect the pockets of landowners *quâ* landowners, beyond depriving them of the cash-value of their rotten boroughs. The Poor Law, that followed it, somewhat diminished their local sway. " The Poor Law Act," writes Nassau Senior to George Villiers (1st December 1835), " is covering England and Wales with a network of small aristocracies, in which the Guardians elected by owners and rate-payers are succeeding to the power and the influence of the magistrates." Surtees, who himself became a Guardian, contrasts with the Justices of the Peace (men of " education, position and influence ") the Guardians, " the great majority selected from the most noisy, vulgar and ignorant of the small tradesmen of the parish, generally conspicuous for nothing but clamour, jobbery and administrative incompetency." But in the wider field of politics the landowner still obtained more than his share of power. Bagehot,

writing in 1867, pointed out that, besides the county representation, " the landed interest takes plenty of seats from other classes. Half the Boroughs of England are represented by considerable landowners. . . . In number, the landed gentry in the House far surpass any other class." John Bright attacked it as " a House where landowners are so numerous and so powerful."

After Reform the old Tories looked on the landed interest as their last hope. Croker writes to Brougham (1843) of the landed gentry " which has made England what she has been and is ; without which no representative Government can last ; without which there can be no steady mean between democracy and despotism." He was arguing for the necessity of Protection ; but Protection went, and in 1851 we find Stanley writing to Croker in the same strain : " The real struggle, the real battle of the Constitution, which has to be fought, is whether the preponderance in the legislative power is to rest with the land and those connected with it, or with the manufacturing interests of the country. If the former, the Throne is safe ; if the latter, in my deliberate judgment, it is gone." Assuming that Croker's major premise was correct—that the landed interest was the only bulwark against democracy or despotism—the Tories were justified in their detestation of Peel, for the repeal of the Corn Laws was a deadly blow to land. It was to be a lingering death, but the blow was none the less mortal. John Bright appreciated the issue : " It is now the towns against the Squires, and the towns will win." The Country Party knew it, when they trooped into the Lobby against Peel— " the Manners, the Somersets, the Bentincks, the Lowthers and the Lennoxes. . . . Sir Charles Burrell, Sir William Jolliffe, Sir Charles Knightley, Sir John Trollope, Sir Edward Kerrison, Sir John Tyrrell, Sir John Yarde Buller. . . . Mr Banks, with a Parliamentary name of two centuries, and Mr Christopher, from that broad Lincolnshire which protection had created ; and the Mileses and the Henleys were there, and the Duncans, the Liddells and the Yorkes ; and Devon sent there the stout

heart of Mr Buck, and Wiltshire the pleasant presence of Mr Long. . . . But the list is too long; or good names remain behind."[9] History has proved that the instinct of these "men of metal and large-acred Squires" was not at fault.

Peel offered a palliative to farmers and landowners in the Drainage Act. "The practical, easy-working Drainage Act, an Act that has advanced agriculture more than all previous inventions and legislation put back"—that is how Surtees praised it in *Ask Mamma*, where we read of Major Yammerton taking advantage of the Government loan and retrieving the prosperity of his estate; and Surtees addressed the Derwent and Shotley Bridge Agricultural Society on the advantages of the Act in 1850. So the Act was useful, though Disraeli argued that the conditions of the loan were hard. Peel prophesied that corn would never fall below 48s. per quarter, and as a matter of fact the annual value of land in Great Britain increased by £12,000,000 between 1847 and 1877. "The land," said John Bright in the House of Commons (1st April 1868), "which you said would go out of cultivation and become of no value, sells for a higher price in the market than it ever brought before." The same orator was alarmed (1866) at the growth of large estates: "Are you aware of the fact that the monopoly in land in the United Kingdom is growing constantly more and more close?" And as to the collateral conditions of owning land, one need only quote that typical John Bull, Archdeacon Grantly. "And then you see," he tells his son, "land gives so much more than the rent. It gives position and influence and political power, to say nothing about the game." With such attractions, it was not surprising that "they who buy land now cannot have above two-and-a-half for their money." (This was about the same percentage as in the Rotten Borough era.[10]) Cobden was referring to the same motives when he exclaimed in a letter to John Bright (1851): "See how every successful trader buys an estate!" The late Lord Willoughby de Broke, in *The Passing Years*, remarked that the period 1850-1880 [11] was a good time—none better—

for the Squirearchy ; but he admitted that it was a " thin " time for agricultural labourers, unless they were directly employed by the landowner.

The Reform Act of 1867 further diminished the political power of the landed proprietors. " Pure ' Squire ' Conservatism is played out," wrote Salisbury to Carnarvon (24th April 1868). But it was the next decade that brought financial loss to all, and to many absolute disaster. Bigger crops in foreign countries and in the Colonies, cheaper freights and bad seasons put an end to our agricultural prosperity, and especially the bad season of 1879, which is reflected so bleakly in Henry Chaplin's letters.[12] The figures of comparison are eloquent : between 1836 and 1846 the average price of wheat was 57s. ; between 1886 and 1896 it was 29s. Alas for Peel's optimism ! Mr G. M. Trevelyan, in his *Life of John Bright*, confesses that after 1876 British agriculture was in a bad way ; it was a debit item in the otherwise satisfactory Profit and Loss Account of British industry. Landowning now began to be a luxury. A time came when a Duke of Bedford admitted that his farming losses were only endurable because he owned " some lodging-houses in Bloomsbury." But the landowner continued loyal to his territorial duties. " It is the tenure of land," said Disraeli, " which makes local government a fact in England, and which allows the great body of Englishmen to be ruled by traditionary influence and by habit, instead of being governed, as in other countries, by mere police." This politico-philosophical view of landowning was re-echoed by St Aldegonde in *Lothair* : " Liberty depended upon land, and the greater the landowners the greater the liberty of a country." But Gladstone also held high views on the subject. He wrote to his son (3rd October 1885) of " the general duty to promote the permanence of families having estates in land " ; and he emphasizes its obligations, one of which was " to assume freely the burden and responsibility of serving in Parliament." In this respect Gladstone was much more conservative than the Whig Harcourt, who, when his elder brother reproached him with having " no landed ideas,

retorted: "You have the land and may leave the ideas to me."

Harcourt was one of those rare younger brothers who rejoiced in his juniority; he thought that elder brothers were mostly fools (*aliter* Tories), and he had no scruples about binding a new and heavy burden on their backs. A Spirit Ironic ordered it that in his old age he should succeed to his own elder brother, and know the weight of the burden; he was the Haman of his own financial gallows. Since Harcourt's day the burden has been doubled and even trebled; two-thirds of Lancashire and of Cheshire have recently changed hands. And yet land retains its lure. Did the Minister for Agriculture in the Labour Government give the true explanation of this lure? "There is too much inclination to create social status out of the possession of land." [13] It is, at any rate, essentially the same explanation as was given by Cobden—and by Archdeacon Grantly.

Any appraisement of the considerable but gradually failing power of aristocracy in the middle part of the nineteenth century would be incomplete without some attempt to bring into account the great personality of the Duke of Wellington, who survived for twenty years the passing of the Reform Bill. His political influence was great; but in recalling his politics our minds must travel beyond the conventional categories of Whig and Tory, for in the true party sense the Duke was neither. Nor was he a Conservative-Liberal like Palmerston, nor a Liberal-Conservative like Peel. He acted, indeed, with the Tories, was the colleague of Liverpool and Eldon, and belonged to the party of Cumberland and Beaufort and Lonsdale and Rutland, but he wore his Toryism with a difference. In 1828 Lord Dudley wrote of him: "He has no zeal for liberty, that is true, but on the other hand, he is quite free from the prejudice of the old Tories, both as to the Church and the State." His Government, accordingly, repealed the Test and Corporation Acts, and passed Catholic Emancipation. Then came the Reform agitation, and the Duke was a very stiff Anti-Reformer. In

November 1830 he made his famous speech in the House of Lords, in which he asserted the perfection of the "Legislature and the system of representation."[14] This may have suited his high Tory supporters of 1830, but was really the pure Whig doctrine of Burke. In the terrible days of May 1832 the Duke once more, by King William's desire, tried to form an Anti-Reform Ministry. He failed, and in the end, with other Tory Lords, withdrew his opposition to the Bill.

So, in the matter of the Corn Laws, he was against Free Trade. He despised Peel for his surrender—said he was frightened by "rotten potatoes," and to the end of his life spoke contemptuously of his Free Trade *volte-face*, and was in his heart sympathetic with the Protectionists. But he took office under Peel in December 1845, when Lord John Russell "handed back the poisoned chalice." "I might with consistency," he wrote to Lord Derby, "and some may think that I ought to have declined to have belonged to Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet on the night of the 20th December. But my opinion is, that if I had, Sir Robert Peel's Government would not have been framed —that we should have had —— and —— in office next morning." So he sat in the House of Lords as a Free Trade Minister, "with his hat down over his face."

Thus he was involved in, and a party to, all the "treacheries" and "surrenders" for which Peel was execrated, and on account of which Peel's character still suffers. But very little, if anything, of this reproach attaches to the memory of the Duke. For it is recognized that he was swayed by no self-seeking motive. As Greville said: "He was utterly devoid of personal and selfish ambition, and there never was a man whose greatness was so *thrust* upon him." He was not an opportunist, for he was not a politician. "Politics," writes Mr G. M. Trevelyan (in his *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*), "were a mystery to the Duke." No politician in his senses would have first offended the Church by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, then dismissed his able Canningite followers, and then further enraged his

Tory supporters by passing the Catholic Emancipation before alienating all the middle classes by his opposition to Reform. No politician would have delivered the uncompromising speech of 2nd November 1830. No politician would have neglected the Press, as the Duke afterwards admitted that he had done, in his Ministry of 1828-1830.

What was he as a statesman? "A narrow and sightless statesman," was Lord Morley's verdict. "Narrow" perhaps from the point of view of the "progressive" theorists of the middle and late nineteenth century; but Lord Morley himself lived to be disillusioned about "progress." And as to "sightless," the Duke kept one aim steadily in view —the dignity and safety of the Crown, and the necessity of carrying on the King's Government. "The Crown," wrote Greville, on the Duke's death, "never possessed a more faithful, devoted and disinterested subject. Without personal attachment to any of the monarchs whom he served, and fully understanding and appreciating their individual merits and demerits, he alike reverenced their great office in the persons of each of them, and would at any time have sacrificed his ease, his fortune, or his life, to serve the Sovereign and the State." He was loyal to George the Fourth, though he knew well "the many inconveniences and evils resulting from the King's habits and character." He was loyal to William the Fourth in the crisis of 1832, when his windows at Apsley House were broken. He wrote to Peel in 1841: "The truth is that all I desire is to be as useful as possible to the Queen's service—to do anything, to go anywhere, and to hold any office or no office, as may be thought most desirable or expedient for the Queen's service." This is why he helped Peel to abolish the Corn Laws—"It is a d——d mess, but I must look to the peace of the country and the Queen." Or, as he wrote more formally to Derby: "I am the servant of the Crown and people. I have been paid and rewarded, I consider myself retained; and that I cannot do otherwise than serve as required when I can do so without dishonour—that is to say, as long as I have health and

strength to enable me to serve. But it is obvious that there is, and there must be, an end of all connexion and counsel between party and me." (Later in life he styled himself Private Citizen of the State.) And so he then and there resigned all future claim to influence the Tories. "Upon that ground, my Lords," he stated in Parliament, "I present myself to your Lordships, and I claim from you an acquiescence in the principle I have laid down, that I positively could not refuse to serve my Sovereign when thus called upon." Disraeli demurred to this principle as being an excellent principle but "not a principle of the English Constitution," and Disraeli was right. But it was this principle of loyalty to the Crown that held the Duke to his duty and public life when others were afraid or disgusted or sulking in their tents. "My dear Croker," he writes (14th August 1832), "I have received your letter. I am very sorry that you don't intend again to be elected to serve in Parliament. I can't conceive for what reason. Ever yours most sincerely,—W."

His devotion to Monarchy had its sensitive side, as appeared when it was proposed to remove his statue. He calls this "a disgrace inflicted by the Sovereign and Government. . . . I entertain no doubt, however, that there exists at Court an earnest desire to avoid to appear to aid to persecute me." [15] Here he was tactlessly treated, and had some excuse for taking offence. But his loyalty never wavered. He was known as the "Dictator," [16] and a Dictator he was in all social matters, as on all political matters it was customary to consult him. Disraeli says (in *Sybil*) that Napoleon, when at St Helena, asked: "What will Wellington do? After all he has done, he will not be content to be quiet. He will change the dynasty." But the Duke was not that kind of would-be Dictator. No doubt he admired the genius of Napoleon, but he felt contempt for his character. As he put it succinctly, Napoleon was "not a gentleman." When consulted by Melbourne's Ministry as to the disposal of Napoleon's remains, he replied: "F. M. the Duke of Wellington

has no hesitation in saying that he does not care one twopenny damn what becomes of the ashes of Napoleon Bonaparte." Greville justly contrasts him with Napoleon, who, "with more genius and fertility of invention was the slave of his own passions, unacquainted with moral restraint, indifferent to the well-being and happiness of his fellow-creatures."

And who shall say that the Duke's sentiment for the Throne was not, after 1832, reinforced by a statesman's instinct that aristocracy was doomed, and must gradually wane, and that, for those who cared for tradition and order and stability, it was now more than ever necessary to look to the Monarchy as a rallying-point. Such at least the Throne has proved, and it still enjoys a respect that is semi-religious, exceeding in degree and in kind the homage which the most abject worshipper of rank ever lavished on a Russell or a Cavendish, a Somerset or a Manners. At a time when aristocracy was held up to scorn by author and agitator as effete and incompetent, and yet as grasping and self-seeking, as a clan of Noodles and Doodles, of Stiltstalkings and Barnacles, of Rigmaroles and Dolittles, we must not underrate the countering effect of this great character.

The Man in the Omnibus, the new arbiter of England's fate, whether Whig or Tory, knew that this wise and self-forgetting man—whatever his political mistakes—was, in a sense, outside and above Party—that he stood by himself and on an eminence. And not only the Man in the Omnibus. "A very great man," is the judgment of Greville, the aristocrat and clubman, "the only great man of the present time—and comparable in point of greatness to the most eminent of those who have lived before him." "The two hemispheres cannot show a man like that, Sir!" exclaimed the American Peabody. "When one looks at the Manchester school, compared to the greatness to which men like the Duke raised their country," wrote King Leopold of Belgium to Queen Victoria, "one cannot help to be alarmed for the future." And this greatness had nothing to do with wealth or display,

with gold aiguillettes or postilions in livery, seneschals and pages of the presence,

> " Quid refert igitur, quantis jumenta fatiget
> Porticibus, quantâ nemorum vectetur in umbrâ."

For the Duke was

> " As the greatest are
> In his simplicity sublime."

But he was none the less an aristocrat of the aristocrats, and a perpetual witness of the virtue there may be in an aristocracy.

With the partial survival of feudal influence there survived also certain practices which had been condemned by the Reformers as the base concomitants of the old system of Government. " Old Corruption " was not dead, but very much alive in some of the small boroughs which Schedule B had deprived of only one of their Members, or which had escaped both Schedules A and B.

Many of these boroughs were still, to all intents and purposes, at the disposal of great local proprietors. Trollope, in *Dr Thorne*, describes the towns of Barsetshire, " which return Members to Parliament generally, in spite of Reform Bills, past, present and coming—in accordance with the dictates of some neighbouring land magnate." Gladstone, in 1832, claimed that the Duke of Newcastle had a right to assert himself at Newark—" Why do you return me to Newark ? Not because I am the Duke of Newcastle's man simply ; but because, coinciding with the duke in political sentiment, you likewise admit that one possessing so much property here, and faithfully discharging the duties which the possession of property entails, ought, in the natural course of things, to exercise a certain influence." Lord Morley is constrained to call his hero's first seat " the rather rotten borough." When Gladstone accepted office under Peel in December 1845, and thereby vacated his seat, his connexion with Newark ended. " Some fond hopes were

entertained by Mr Gladstone's friends that the Duke might allow him to sit for the rest of the Parliament, but the Duke was not the man to make concessions to a betrayer of the territorial interest." A seat was easily found for Lord Granville (then Lord Leveson) in 1837, at Morpeth, "a borough where Lord Grey had influence." Lord George Bentinck writes to Croker (30th September 1847), with reference to the Coercion Bill: "I could tell you a strange story of the Duke of Buckingham and his nine Members." It was a capital grievance of the Reformers that Buckinghamshire had eleven Members of Parliament, while Manchester, with double the annual value of that county, had only two. Lord Robert Cecil (afterwards Lord Salisbury) came in for Stamford under the auspices of his kinsman Lord Exeter in 1857, and remained its representative till 1867 without once being opposed. Harcourt's first political contest was for the Kirkcaldy Burghs, in 1859, but he was worsted by the "feudal" influence of the Ferguson family. Cobden, in 1846, inveighed against "pocket-boroughs and nominee candidates, Ripons and Stamfords, Woodstocks and Marlboroughs."

Mr Merdle (in *Little Dorrit*, 1855) was the proprietor of three boroughs—"Three little rotten holes in this Island containing three little ignorant, drunken, guzzling, dirty, out-of-the-way constituencies that had reeled into Mr Merdle's pocket." The voters therein, said Mr Merdle, "are perfectly aware, Sir, of their duty to Society. They will return anybody I send to them for that purpose." In *The Small House at Allington* (1864), Mr Palliser, the nephew and heir of the Duke of Omnium, "sat for a borough, which was absolutely under the Duke's command." Readers of *Bleak House* (published 1852) will remember that Sir Leicester Dedlock owned three seats:

"On these occasions always delivering in his own candidateship, as a kind of handsome wholesale order to be promptly executed. Two other little seats that belong to him he treats as retail orders of less importance; merely sending down the men and signifying to the tradespeople,

'You will have the goodness to make these materials into two Members of Parliament, and to send them home when done.'"

Sir Leicester Dedlock also deplores the expense of a General Election. Even where his party has been successful, it "has not triumphed without being put to an enormous expense. Hundreds of thousands of pounds!" His kinswoman, Volumnia, indiscreetly asks: "What for?" The embarrassed Baronet replies: "For necessary expenses. And I trust to your good sense, Volumnia, not to pursue the subject, here or elsewhere." It was whispered abroad, however, that "these necessary expenses will in some two hundred election petitions be unpleasantly connected with the word bribery."

In his celebrated maiden speech in the House of Commons (7th December 1837) Disraeli declared that, since the Reform Bill, "the stain of borough-mongering had only assumed a deeper and darker hue, and that the intimidation was more highly organized than even under the old system." This statement was not likely to be agreeable to a House of which the majority were Reformers, and was received with derision. But Carlyle wrote, six years later, in *Past and Present*: "Our theory, written down in all books and law-books, spouted forth from all barrel-heads, is perfect purity of Ten Pound Franchise, absolute sincerity of question put and answer given;—and our practice is irremediable bribery; irremediable, unpunishable, which you will do more harm than good by attempting to punish." Carlyle sarcastically proposes that an Election Office be opened in Downing Street, "with a Tariff of Boroughs," just as Henry Fox turned the Pay Office into a mart for votes in order to pass the Peace of Paris. As to the general prevalence of post-Reform bribery, I will add the testimony of John Bright, who told the people of Dublin (2nd November 1866) that a great many of the small boroughs of England and Ireland "returned their Members by means of corruption more or less." And, besides corrupting by money, many borough Members corrupted by patronage and by procuring jobs

THE "SATISFACTION" OF A "GENTLEMAN"

The early volumes of "Punch" contain many attacks, pictorial & literary, on the custom of the duel, which gradually fell into desuetude, & after the 1850's became a subject of ridicule.

(*See p.* 130)

for their supporters, and were mainly dependent upon this for retaining their seats.[17]

Robarts (in 1834) confides in Greville about his borough, Maidstone, which had always had the worst of reputations for corruption: "Before the Reform Bill, when the constituency was less numerous, the matter was easily and simply conducted. The price of votes was as regularly fixed as the price of bread—so much for a single vote and so much for a plumper—and this he had to pay. After the Reform Bill he resolved to pay no more money, as corruption was to cease. The consequence was that during his canvass none of the people who had formerly voted for him would promise him their votes. They all sulked and hesitated, and in short waited to see what he would pay for them. I asked him what were the new constituencies. He answered: 'If possible worse than the old.'" In March 1834 the House of Commons passed a Bill disfranchising Liverpool for bribery at the late election; but this Bill did not pass the Lords. At this election one thousand three hundred Freemen of Liverpool received bribes varying from £10 to £60; one sold himself for as much as £80. For bribery at Liverpool, Forbes Mackenzie, the Conservative Whip, was unseated in 1853.

Charles Villiers, writing to his brother George (afterwards Lord Clarendon) in 1835, described Wolverhampton as one of the new boroughs, and *as yet* uncorrupted. Lady Clarendon was indignant about the Whig bribery at St Albans in 1841. Roebuck, some years later, instanced this city as an example of the corruption that still existed: "So long as the small constituencies are preserved, we shall in vain look for anything deserving the name of purity of election." St Albans retained her evil reputation. In *Punch*, vol. xxi., p. 225 (July to December 1851 [18]), there is a cartoon depicting the "Horror of that Respectable Saint, St Alban, on Hearing the Confession of a St Albans Elector," and on the next page there is an amusing but rather laboured Life of the Saint, written in Wardour-Street Old English: "And also at ye worde of ye Sainte ye doores of ye publicke

houses wolde flie opene, that men entered therein without coine and eate and drinke of the beste, and paide none, yet the landlordes loste noughte therebie; for ye Sainte, by his miraculous power, made coine to come into their pouches." St Albans and Sudbury were disfranchised in 1852. When John Bright contested Durham in 1843, and was beaten by Lord Dungarvan, three hundred men received £1 each for their vote. Dungarvan was unseated on petition. Bulwer Lytton, in 1849, caustically described Leominster, which he was unsuccessfully contesting, as a constituency that "won't promise either way, that expect to be bought, and (damn their impudence!) expect one to be as much a Radical as if they gave one their votes for nothing." Trollope was defeated at Beverley in 1868 by unscrupulous bribery, but the borough was in consequence disfranchised; his own election expenses amounted to £2000.[19] In *Dr Thorne* (1858) he has described such a contest at the cathedral city of Barchester: "Beer was to be had at the public-houses almost without question by all who chose to ask for it; and rum and brandy were dispensed to select circles within the bars with almost equal profusion." This is all of a piece with *Punch's* Life of St Alban, quoted above. Tennyson had a story of a coachman, of whom he asked, as they approached Winchester, what sort of a place it was. "Debauched, Sir, like all cathedral towns," was the coachman's reply, who may well have had elections in his mind. We may conclude this melancholy catalogue by recalling that Brougham, in 1866, nearly at the end of his long life, "put forth what he termed his legacy to his countrymen, denouncing the electoral corruption, which was undermining and rendering ineffectual the great gift of Parliamentary reform."[20] It is to Disraeli's credit that he insisted on passing the Corrupt Practices Act of 1868 as a complement to his Reform Act of 1867.

One aristocratic privilege survived indeed the passing of Reform, but then gradually decayed, and after the "fifties" wholly ceased to be claimed by the gentlemen of England—

the privilege of "calling out" your enemy and putting a bullet through his heart, or receiving his bullet in yours. The early volumes of *Punch* often refer to duelling, and *Punch's* view of the custom is significant. In a cartoon (1842, vol. iii., p. 72), "Social Miseries," we see Captain Percussion calling on a wretched dissipated youth with this "Gratifying Intelligence"—"Here I am, old fellow—all right—six to-morrow morning—Wimbledon—brought the barkers—come to keep you company—and scrape some lint while you make arrangements in case of accidents, as it is your first duel." [21] There is another horrible cartoon in vol. v., p. 581 (1843), entitled "The Satisfaction of a Gentleman," showing the two principals with fools' caps on their heads, over one of which a noose dangles; the seconds are handing them their "barkers"; there is a doctor in attendance, and a skeleton is digging a grave. Another cartoon (1844, vol. vi., p. 130) represents the widow of Colonel Fawcett, who had been slain by his brother-in-law and challenger, Lieutenant Munro, vainly applying for a pension to Peel and the Duke of Wellington. Mr Punch sarcastically assumed that the Duke, and Lords Winchilsea and Cardigan, and "other distinguished heroes of twelve paces" would personally charge themselves with payment of the pension. Mr Punch also commended Roebuck in 1845 when he brought to the Speaker's notice the challenge he had received from Somers, M.P. for Sligo. "The Argument of the Pistol" (1845, vol. ix., p. 1) is a violent attack on the practice, which concludes: "Public opinion is at last tracing on the duelling pistol *ultima ratio stultorum!* The last argument of fools!" In this year was established a society "for the discouraging of Duelling."

Disraeli, in 1837, by means of a letter to the Press, tried to provoke Charles Austin, an eminent barrister, to a challenge, but Austin only applied to the Court of Queen's Bench for a criminal information, and Disraeli had to apologize to the Court. In 1846, being insulted by Colonel Jonathan Peel, he placed himself in Bentinck's hands: an

ample apology by Peel prevented a duel. Lord George Bentinck, during the Corn Law debates, gave and received many challenges.[22] He received one from Colonel Peel, who also wished to "call out" Disraeli. Macaulay was challenged by Wallace in 1838. Wallace had edited Mackintosh's *History of the Revolution of 1688*, and took offence at Macaulay's review of the book. Macaulay was ignorant that Wallace was the editor, and a friend advised him to send for the police; but at that date such a course would have injured his character, and he asked Lord Strafford to act as his second, who contrived very sensibly to arrange the matter with Wallace's second. Lord Cardigan's duel with Captain Tuckett has been mentioned already. Cardigan, against whom public opinion was strong, was tried by the Lords for wounding Tuckett, and escaped on a technical plea, all the peers declaring him "Not guilty, upon my honour," except the Duke of Cleveland, who said: "Not guilty legally, upon my honour." It is to be noted that Dombey, a City merchant, is represented by Dickens as quite ready to fight Carker, his business manager and the supposed seducer of Mrs Dombey. "'Sir,' says the Major, with the horse's cough, 'the world in these things has opinions, which must be satisfied.' 'I know it,' rejoined Mr Dombey."

But about 1850 Cobden, when challenged by a certain captain, threatened to hand him over to the police. In 1854 Shaftesbury was challenged by Lord Mornington for mentioning, in his Reformatory School campaign, a case in which Lord Mornington thirty years previously had been refused the custody of his children. Shaftesbury referred Mornington to a police magistrate or his solicitor. Shaftesbury would have been precluded from fighting by religious principle, as was Wilberforce in 1792; and Cobden did not belong to the class which recognized the jurisdiction of Laws of Honour, though about his courage there need be no question. The last duel fought in England is said to have taken place in 1852, at Weybridge, between Colonel Romilly, son of Sir Samuel, and George Smythe, the "Coningsby"

of Disraeli's novel, and afterwards Lord Strangford. Smythe accused Romilly, his colleague in the representation of Canterbury, of unfairly influencing the voters against him. Smythe was eminently bellicose : he challenged an undergraduate at Cambridge, wanted to fight Roebuck, and provoked a challenge from Monckton Milnes.

In 1862 The O'Donoghue challenged Sir Robert Peel, the Irish Secretary ; but the matter was brought before the Commons, and Palmerston prevented a duel. This was the subject of a cartoon in *Punch* by Tenniel (8th March 1862), in which the Irishman is drawn as a hairy monster. In Trollope's *Small House at Allington* (1864) Bernard Dale decides that a duel with faithless Adolphus Crosbie is out of the question. " Thirty years ago he would have called the man out and shot at him till one of them was hit. Nowadays it is hardly possible for a man to do that ; and yet what would the world say of him if he allowed such an injury as this to pass without vengeance ? " A similar dilemma must often have confronted the Mid-Victorian gentleman.

Later in the century the very idea of fighting a duel became ridiculous. Lord Willoughby de Broke, a Master of Hounds, was threatened with a challenge in 1879 by Count Alniasy for using strong expressions to Count Batthyany at a meet. (I wonder what Lord Scamperdale would have said if he had been waited on by Mr Soapy Sponge's seconds the day after the meet at Dallington Burn.) After Gladstone's retirement, Harcourt, referring to his personal differences with Lord Rosebery, observed that in the old days these would have ended in a duel, as in the case of Canning and Castlereagh, and " I might have been shot in the buttocks ! " The O'Gorman Mahon, that long-lived Irishman who had supported O'Connell in the Clare election of 1828 and died a Member of Parliament in 1891, fought thirteen duels ; but he had been a soldier of fortune in many climes.[23]

The tragic Fawcett-Munro duel made a deep impression on the humane mind of the Prince Consort, who suggested to the Duke of Wellington the establishment of Courts of

Honour ; but this remedy commended itself neither to the Duke, nor to the Lords of the Admiralty, nor to the Master of the Ordnance, nor to the Cabinet. But in 1844 the Articles of War were amended so as to declare it to be " suitable to the character of honourable men to apologize and offer redress for wrong or insult committed, and equally so for the party aggrieved to accept, frankly and cordially, explanation and apologies for the same." These words have a manly and noble ring, and Sir Theodore Martin, the Prince Consort's biographer, says that " the death blow was dealt by this declaration to so-called affairs of honour. Duelling was so discredited that it became from that time practically impossible." But Sir Theodore admits that " a change so great could scarcely be effected without some temporary injury to the tone of manners. On natures of a certain cast the dread of being called out exerted a salutary restraint." The Amended Articles are a landmark in the history of English manners, for they indirectly put an end to the theory that a gentleman, in the settlement of his private quarrels, was above or outside the law. Public opinion, which had come to be largely the opinion of the middle classes (and was faithfully reflected in *Punch*, the middle-class organ), had set itself against the idea that a man might insult or injure another man and then in effect murder him—as Sir Mulberry Hawk murdered Lord Frederick Verisopht.

And it is noteworthy that the change was brought about by Prince Albert, who, with his usual persistence, prevailed against the sentiment of the Duke and of the Services. In this, as in other matters, he identified himself with the views of the middle classes. As will appear in a later chapter, this was not the only victory he won against aristocracy.

NOTES

[1] See *Political Portraits—Duke of Newcastle* (Charles Whibley).

[2] " Where are dog and under-dog is no social climbing, only indifferent pride and sullen apathy. But with middle-dog creeps into social atmosphere the subtle taint of Snobbery " (*Trollope, a Commentary* (Michael Sadleir), p. 24).

[3] *Lady Palmerston and her Times* (Mabell, Countess of Airlie, vol. ii., p. 170).

[4] Vol. i., p. 25.

[5] Vol. i., p. 308.

[6] Vol. i., pp. 198, 199.

[7] This was all-important to his political position. Some years previously Lord George Bentinck had written to his brother, Lord Henry : " I have found the party the most wonderful man the world has ever seen, and I cannot get these fools to take him, because he is not a country gentleman."

[8] It is always easy to ascertain who were the members of the Cabinet in any year, by referring to the " Introductions " to the volumes of *Punch*.

[9] *Lord George Bentinck, a Political Biography* (Disraeli), p. 299. Disraeli was fond of these καταλόγοι. After the General Election of 1857 he sends Lady Londonderry an account of his visits to supporters in North Bucks : " The Pauncefort Duncombes of Brick Hill Manor, Colonel Hanmer of Stockgrove Park, the Chesters of Chichely, the Lovetts of Liscombe, the Dayrells of Lillingstone Dayrell, English gentry with *châteaux*, parks and broad domains ; greater men by a good deal than many German princes, and yet utterly unknown in London Society."

[10] *Supra*, p. 31.

[11] Mr Michael Sadleir describes the years 1846-1871 as " this Indian summer of the Squirearchy " (*Trollope, a Commentary*, p. 15).

[12] See *Henry Chaplin, a Memoir*, p. 101.

[13] Mr Noel Buxton in the House of Commons, 3rd April 1924. Mr Lloyd George (7th December 1925) made legitimate fun of a recent advertisement in *The Times* : " County seat up to 8000 acres wanted to purchase by financial magnate *desirous of consolidating social status*." " A lot of people bought land for the ' swank ' of the thing " (Speech at Shrewsbury, 30th January 1926).

[14] See p. 59.

[15] The Duke was fond of thus accumulating infinitives : " I propose to endeavour to induce them to avoid to involve the country in the additional difficulties of a difference of opinion " (from his letter to Lord Derby in 1846, previously quoted).

[16] He wrote to Lady Salisbury (28th August 1850) : " It is true I was at one time called Dictator ; and was so in fact, having myself filled and done the duty of all the principal officers of the Government" (*A Great Man's Friendship*, p. 84). This was in 1834, after William the Fourth had dismissed Melbourne and while Peel's return was awaited.

[17] See Morley's *Gladstone*, vol. i., p. 110.

[18] *Punch* did not begin to put the dates at the top of each page till July 1855.

[19] This contest provided him with material for ***Ralph the Heir.***

[20] *The Victorian Chancellors* (*Brougham*) (J. B. Atlay, vol. i., p. 376).

[21] Disraeli describes these " miseries " in *Vivian Grey* : " You have no appetite for dinner, but you are too brave not to appear at table ; and you are called out after the second glass by the arrival of your solicitor, who comes to make your will. You pass a restless night, and rise in the morning as bilious as a Bengal general."

[22] ***Henry Chaplin, a Memoir***, p. 40.

[23] In 1881 Captain O'Shea sent him as his second with a challenge to Parnell, but no duel took place.

V

THE DECLINE OF THE WHIGS

Origin of Whigs—Eighteenth-Century Whigs—Reform Bill & Whig Fortunes—Whig Principles—Whigs a Caste—Their Pride & Insolence—Grey, Russell, Macaulay—Cousinhood—Hate of Tories—Tactless Treatment of the Queen—Arrogance to Radicals—Whigs & Cobden—Whigs & Bright—Whigs & Gladstone—Whigs & Reform after 1832—Disraeli carries Reform—Subsequent History of Whigs—General Observations on Whigs

ARISTOCRACY as a political, and still more as a social, force survived the first Reform Bill, and still survives; but the aristocratic party of the Whigs, who carried the measure and expected therefrom enduring benefits for themselves, had greatly declined in strength before the second Reform Bill was passed, and is now dead. Johnson said that the Devil was the first Whig; if so, he is also the last.

Disraeli did not go back quite so far as Johnson; he pretended that the first Whigs were those favourites of Henry the Eighth to whom were given the Church lands. Certainly the Russells and Cavendishes are descended from these favourites: "The grants to the House of Russell," wrote Burke, "were so enormous, as not only to outrage economy, but to stagger credibility." But the Cecils also were recipients, and the Cecils are Tories and High Churchmen. Addison, in the 54th *Freeholder*, tried to exhibit Queen Elizabeth as a Whig; his commentator, Bishop Hurd, remarked: "The author is pleasant in making a Whig of Queen Elizabeth." Pym and Hampden and Eliot were more unexceptionable as Whigs, or as precursors of Whigs, and the Long Parliament might be deemed by Whigs to have a Whiggish atmosphere; but at Oliver Cromwell most Whigs boggled. Addison would not "impute to any Tory-scheme

the administration of King James the Second, on condition that they do not reproach the Whigs with the usurpation of Oliver ; as being satisfied that the principles of those governments are respectively disclaimed and abhorred by all the men of sense and virtue in both parties, as they now stand." Mr G. M. Trevelyan writes : " Whig tradition, so confident on other subjects, never quite knew what to make of Oliver." And yet a popular Whig toast was that " of the man in the mask, and then of the man that would do it without a mask."

Russell and Sidney were recognized as Whig champions and Whig martyrs. Barillon thought Sidney had " republican " views. Burnet said : " He was stiff to all republican principles, and such an enemy to everything that looked like monarchy that he set himself in high opposition against Cromwell when he was made Protector." Sidney discussed a plan of insurrection with Russell and Essex. A Whiggish writer has recently stated that Russell and Sidney were " judicially murdered by the triumphant Tories," but these Whigs were potential rebels. There is no doubt about William the Third being a Whig hero, and he brought with him Bentinck and Keppel, who in due course became the heads of great Whig houses. After the accession of George the First the Whigs enjoyed, with very little participation by the Tories, fifty years of power. Amongst the chief names in " the great Whig Connexion " were (according to Macaulay) Cavendish, Lennox, Fitzroy, Bentinck, Manners, Conway and Wentworth ; but, taking the eighteenth century as a whole, the Cavendishes and the Russells were the two great Whig families. During this period the Whigs were fond of professing " republican " sentiments. I think Horace Walpole claimed to be a republican when his friend Conway was dismissed by George the Third ; but the word probably implied little more than the possession of old Roman virtue, and a righteous abhorrence of tyrants.[1] When the French Revolution split the Whigs, the Russells followed Fox and the Cavendishes Burke. Creevey, a politician of " the Mountain," condemns the Cavendishes as " timid, idle and haughty " ; but " all the Russells are

excellent, and in my opinion there is nothing in the aristocracy to be compared with this family." The Russells always tended to embrace the extremer Whig doctrines. The Foxite Whigs were not excessively patriotic in the great war—Fox openly expressed a hope for the defeat of Doyle's expedition. Their minds were obsessed with admiration of Napoleon; at Brooks's, just before the news of Waterloo arrived, they were prophesying the victory of his army. Henry Edward Fox, afterwards the fourth Lord Holland, wrote in his journal of "the shame, disgrace and atrocity of his imprisonment"; he lamented the death of one "who occupied so many of my thoughts and all my political affections."

The Regency Bill passed in 1811, and the Prince, who had formerly identified himself with the Whigs, became virtually King; but the Whigs did not return to power. The Regent disliked Grey and Grenville, and his offers to them of a share in the Administration were made only that they might be rejected. The persons "with whom the early habits of my public life were formed" were now no more welcome to George than was Falstaff to the newly crowned Harry the Fifth. Later, the Prince's treatment of his wife and his daughter ranged the Whigs definitely against him. The Whigs were now at their *nadir*; Lord Grey thought that neither himself nor even Durham his son-in-law could ever come into power. They were in disagreement both as to the practicability and the desirability of Reform. They earned the character of being ill-starred, inefficient and inconsistent, and till the end of Liverpool's administration were hopelessly out in the cold. "From the beginning of the century," wrote Sydney Smith, "to the death of Lord Liverpool was an awful period for those who had the misfortune to entertain Liberal opinions, and were too honest to sell them for the ermine of the judge or the lawn of the prelate." There was "no more chance of a Whig administration than of a thaw in Zembla." The Whigs, in fact, were in the unfortunate position which the Tories occupied after the accession of George the First.

The Reform Bill changed the situation, and, before examining the Whig attitude towards Reform and the ultimate effect of Reform on Whig fortunes, we may usefully recall the principles of Whiggism. On the statue of William the Third at Brixham is engraved his famous declaration : " The Liberties of England and the Protestant Religion I will maintain "—a phrase which doubtless was composed for the Deliverer by British Whigs. A subsidiary but vital Whig principle was the irremovability of the judges unless both Houses of Parliament petitioned for a dismissal, which is equivalent to *quamdiu se bene gesserint*. But all Whiggism flows from the doctrine that a subject has a right to resist the oppression or illegality of his sovereign when resistance becomes " necessary." Just before his execution Russell said " he was still of opinion that the King was limited by law, and that when he broke through those limits his subjects might defend themselves and restrain him." Prudent Whigs added the proviso that resistance should have an almost certain prospect of success, otherwise the leader is executed and his followers are worse off than ever. Every sensible Englishman will agree that the conduct of James the Second made the occasion one of " necessity," and that to the Whigs who then resisted we owe our liberties. It will also be agreed that for this service they afterwards rewarded themselves generously. But Necessity is a dangerous plea, which should be closely scanned ; it may mean, like the Sophist's " Justice," only the interest of the stronger man.[2]

The maintenance of the Protestant faith is a simpler principle, and has always been inscribed on Whig banners, from that of William of Orange to that of Sir William Harcourt. But in time the principle of the supremacy of Protestantism became difficult to reconcile with another Whig principle—that of religious equality : this principle impelled Lord George Bentinck, though he had developed from a Whig into a Tory Protectionist, to support the Jews' Bill. So the Whigs were in favour of Catholic Emancipation, but the No-Popery campaign of Lord John Russel

seriously embarrassed the Irish administration of Lord Clarendon.

Protestantism and Resistance are negative principles. Reform was inspired by a very positive principle—that of the subject's right to choose his rulers. This, too, might be deduced from the Social Contract theory of the Whig philosopher, Locke; but it was not preached by the Whigs of 1688, who justified their action by the illegalities of James. Many Whigs adopted Reform, not as embodying a Whig principle, but with the object of ousting the Tories. It is true that many more were sincere Reformers, who proved their sincerity by sacrificing their own boroughs.

Johnson defined Whig as "the name of a faction." Johnson was a splenetic Tory; but a latter-day Whig (and a Russell) admitted that "Whiggery, rightly understood, is not a political creed but a social caste . . . its substance has been relationship." [3] Lady Airlie tells us that the Whigs "went so far as to invent their own pronunciation of common words"—e.g. *Chany, Haryot, yallar, chymist.*[4] Lord John Russell talked Whiggishly of "cowcumbers" and "laylocks," called a woman an "'ooman," and pronounced "obliged" as "obleeged." With all their virtues and achievements, their exclusiveness prevented the Whigs from being as broadly national a party as the Tories. Many an adherent of the Whigs, from Burke to Palmerston, might have confessed: "With a great price purchased I this Whigdom." A Gower or a Grosvenor would have simply observed: "But I was Whig-born." "I'm not a Whig," exclaimed Thackeray, "but oh, how I should like to be one!"

The Tories consented to be led by Canning and Peel and Disraeli, but the Whigs never gave the lead to Burke —except in the House of Commons; Burke never even attained to the Cabinet. True to their traditions, the Whigs tried to keep Brougham down, excluding him from the "Junto" at Lansdowne House, and in 1830 trying to fob him off with the office of Attorney-General. Brougham never forgave the slight. Greville records (1836) that the

Whigs, while relying on Radical support, excluded Radicals "from any participation in those social civilities which Ministers usually dispense to their adherents." Lady Airlie gives a typical instance of this unwisdom :

"Mr Giles of Youngsbury, Hertfordshire, was a pleasant bachelor of fifty, very popular in the County Society, when he was required to act in the Whig interest. When nothing was wanted of him he was treated in the same manner as Tierney was by the aristocratic Whigs, and spoken of rather contemptuously as 'the Hertfordshire Brewer.'" [5]

It was assumed by Lady Melbourne that "the Hertfordshire Brewer" would be willing to give up his seat at St Albans to a member of the illustrious Lamb family (who were, after all, the near descendants of a not very reputable solicitor). Mr Giles was no more enthusiastic over this arrangement than was Brougham over the offer of the Attorney-Generalship. Stiff Whig pride lost Lord John Russell an estate. His daughter, Lady Georgiana Peel, tells in her *Recollections* how Sir George Russell (not a relative) was minded to give her father Chequers out of admiration for his character. With this object Sir George called on the Duke of Bedford. "He drove back without making the offer! For the Duke received him coldly; did not offer him luncheon, nor even refreshment. Sir George felt chilled and repulsed. His generosity died within him."

"No one," wrote Trollope, "is so hostile to lowly born pretenders to high station as the pure Whig." His Duke of Omnium "was a Whig—a huge mountain of a colossal Whig . . . He was born to be a Lord-Lieutenant and a Knight of the Garter." When he gave a dinner-party "it seemed to be quite out of the question that the Duke should take any trouble with his guests whatever." He fed them, but "it was beyond his good nature to talk to them." In fact, he did not even say "How d'ye do?" to them. His attitude towards Queen Victoria was almost that of an equal. "He was very willing that the Queen should be queen, so long as he was allowed to be Duke of Omnium. . . . Their revenues were about the same." His greatness

appears by comparing him with Lord de Courcy. De Courcy was "a Court Whig, following the fortunes and enjoying, when he could get it, the sunshine of the throne. He was a sojourner at Windsor and a visitor at Balmoral."

Grey has been described as "a perfect Whig; he combined substantially the aristocratic traditions of Newcastle and Rockingham with an enthusiasm for popular liberty derived from Fox."[6] No one was more fitted to lead the ideal Whig combination, "a pure but well-connected Ministry, governing a grateful country on the most liberal principles of *laissez-faire*, supported by the solid worth of the middle class."[7] But he partook of the Whig exclusiveness; he thought nothing of literary genius in comparison with rank.[8]

Lord John Russell was noted for his Whig stiffness of manner. Bulwer Lytton, in *The New Timon*, described him:

> "How formed to lead, if not too proud to please!
> His fame would fire you, but his manners freeze."

Cobden said: "He breathes the atmosphere of a privileged clique. His sympathies are aristocratic. He is sometimes thinking of the House of Russell whilst Peel is occupied upon Manchester." It is fair to add that his freezing manner was largely due to shyness. On his death-bed he said: "I have seemed cold to my friends, but it was not in my heart."

Macaulay was one of the few outsiders ever admitted into the inner recesses of Whigdom—"probably the only man," writes G. W. E. Russell, "who, being outside the privileged enclosure, ever penetrated to its heart and assimilated its spirit." He was not without relish for titled society: "I dined yesterday at Holland House, all Lords except myself." "Lady Holland," writes Sir George Trevelyan, "listened to him with unwonted deference, and scolded him with a circumspection that was in itself a compliment." On one occasion this circumspection failed. "Go round to Mr Macaulay," she ordered her footman, "and say *that'll do*." His loquacity must have been sometimes trying. Creevey, after meeting him at dinner, described him as "a noisy, vulgar fellow." But Holland House, that "clique of pure

Whiggery," followed a wise instinct in making Macaulay welcome. The ancient chieftains were always kind to the bard that sang the glories of their race. The Whigs have been fortunate in their historians.

The Reform Bill added nearly a quarter of a million voters to the register, but the Whigs still proceeded on the calm assumption that government was to be confined to "the sacred circle of the great-grand-motherhood." And, strange to relate, for another generation they succeeded in ruling the country on this basis of relationship. Grey had a son-in-law in the Cabinet, a son at the Colonial Office, a cousin at the Woods and Forests, and a brother-in-law as Patronage Secretary. "Damn the Whigs!" exclaimed Sir Robert Peel in 1835, "they're all cousins." Even the Whig biographer of Macaulay confesses: "It required not a little courage to represent the Whigs of 1838 as deaf to the claims of private interest and family connexion." When Lord John Russell formed the Administration of 1846 his opponents alleged that it was mainly composed of his cousins. Certainly his relatives had their share of the spoils of office: the Home Secretary and War Secretary *were* his cousins; the Colonial Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were his sons-in-law, and his father-in-law was Lord Privy Seal. Sir William Harcourt thus described this Government: "Lord John Russell returned to office in 1846, like the French emigrants, having learnt nothing and forgotten nothing; and the Government, as a matter of course, was again parcelled out, with cynical contemptuousness, among Greys, Russells, Eliots,—and again, Eliots, Russells, Greys." Bulwer Lytton, attacking the Coalition in January 1855, attributed the blunders of the Crimean War to Whig exclusiveness, under which "a small hereditary combination of great families" had obtained "a fictitious monopoly of Liberal policy and a genuine monopoly of lethargic Government." This speech helped to throw out the Coalition, and Palmerston became Prime Minister; but *plus ça change, plus ça reste la même chose.* A few months

later we find Ellenborough, in the House of Lords, ridiculing the Cabinet as "the family party," nothing but "the old Whig party, a set of near relations, and one in which a particular family connexion was specially prominent and powerful, and that family connexion was represented by the leader of the House." That leader was Granville, and the Cabinet boasted also Argyll, Grey, Clarendon, Russell and Carlisle. Granville in reply remarked that it had been said that "we had gone back a hundred years in our history and that the heads of the Gower, Howard and Cavendish families sat in conclave and dictated to the Prime Minister." After a more or less serious defence of consanguineous appointments he concluded:

"My Lords, I had better make a clean breast of it at once; and I am obliged to admit that some of those who went before me had such quivers full of daughters who did not die old maids that I have relations upon this side of the House, relations upon the cross benches, relations upon the opposite side of the House, and I actually had the unparalleled misfortune to have no fewer than three cousins in the Protectionist Administration of my noble friend opposite."

In contrast with the typical, haughty, high-stomached Whig, Granville was surely the Ferdinand Barnacle of the party, "a very easy, pleasant fellow indeed, and his manners were exceedingly winning." But a Barnacle he was, who displayed the most persevering adhesion to the Ship of Government. After a short interval of Tory office, Palmerston returned to power in 1859, with Granville, Argyll, Grey, Russell, Newcastle and Villiers. Of this Ministry Lord Morley (referring to the year 1864) writes: "The great families still held ostensibly the predominance in the Liberal Party which they had earned by their stout and persistent fidelity to parliamentary reform." But Gladstone, never a Whig, was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was now only kept out of the lead by the longevity of Palmerston and Russell.

Was Johnson then so much amiss in defining Whig as "the name of a faction"? Whig writers themselves have

described their party as a "clique" or "connexion" or "caste," and such bodies, when they act politically, are very prone to act factiously. Moreover each chieftain was naturally jealous of his rivals, and liked to move independently; in George the Third's time the Duke of Bedford led what was called "the Bloomsbury Gang." It was the creed of the Whig leaders that certain families had a sort of Divine Right to rule; to this Disraeli referred in the first number of *The Press* (1855): "The morbid vanity of Woburn Abbey must be represented without an interval in the royal councils. The Whigs may perish, but the Duke of Bedford must be satisfied." And if great Whigs were arrogant towards humbler Whigs, their sentiment for the Tories was one of extreme hate (no doubt heartily reciprocated), mixed with contempt. Macaulay detested Croker "more than cold boiled veal," and Croker described Macaulay's *History* as "that elaborate compound of falsehood and poison." "The vigour, heartiness, and sincerity of this political hatred put to shame the more tepid convictions of our degenerate days," wrote G. W. E. Russell, instancing the reply of a Whig mother to her little daughter's inquiry whether Tories were born wicked or became wicked afterwards: "They are born wicked, and grow worse." Lord Grey of the Reform Bill encouraged his grandchildren to cut notches with hatchets in the Duke of Northumberland's gates. This passion of hate probably dated back to the times of the Civil Wars and Stuart persecution, and it was revived by Pitt's repressive measures; but the contempt that accompanied it may have been the survival of a feeling which the Whigs entertained for their opponents during their long ostracism in the reigns of the first two Georges. The Foxite Whigs, in the period of their own exclusion, continued to regard the Tories as illiterate and unfashionable; they strongly disliked the idea of a Whig marrying into a Tory family. When the fifth Duke of Bedford seemed inclined to marry a Gordon, the Duchess of Devonshire wrote to Lady Melbourne: "He will farm all morning, smoak his pipe with Manchester, attend to the

domestic differences of Susan and *her old man*, and be amus'd with seeing the *young one* jump over the backs of chairs." A Whig of a later generation, Sir Frederick Lamb, was angry at his niece, a Cowper, marrying Lord Ashley (the philanthropic Lord Shaftesbury): "What has poor Min done to deserve to be linked to such a fate, and in a family generally disliked, reputed mad, and of feelings, opinions and connexions directly the reverse of all of ours?" The Whigs always imagined they had better brains than the Tories. Macaulay was wont to write of the Tories in the House of Commons in Shippen's time as a mere collection of fox-hunters, and the Whig or Liberal tradition that the Tory Party must always be the "stupid" party has endured almost to our own day.

But the Whigs were not of an infallible wisdom. With a much-extended franchise they made a mistake in engrossing political power. They made another mistake in the attitude they assumed towards the Throne. It was natural that they should expect the Queen's accession to confirm their party in power. In the case of George the First his ignorance of our country and our language made him peculiarly dependent upon his Ministers; her youth, sex and inexperience were almost as great limitations upon Victoria. Melbourne soon won the confidence and affection of his royal pupil, and for some years she was a whole-hearted partisan of the Whigs, though even then an intelligent observer prophesied: "She will end as a Tory, and something more." In 1837 she wrote to her uncle King Leopold: "I have reason to be highly pleased with all my Ministers, and hope to God that the elections may be favourable, as I well know that the present Ministry is the best and most moderate we can have." In 1840 she tells Prince Albert that the Tories "do everything that they can to be rude to me. . . . The Whigs are the only safe and loyal people, and the Radicals will also rally round their Queen to protect her from the Tories." She was displeased with the undergraduates of Oxford, who, after an enthusiastic welcome

of the Prince, "had the bad taste to show their party feeling in groans and hisses when the name of a Whig was mentioned, which they ought not to have done in my husband's presence." (In 1843 on a similar occasion the Cambridge men behaved better; Melbourne, himself a Cantab, mentions the "remarkable and advantageous contrast.") Lady Clarendon records in her Diary (21st June 1841) that the Queen, in speaking to Lord Clarendon, "seemed to identify herself completely with the Liberal party—talked of 'us' and 'we.'" When Melbourne resigned, the Queen was overwhelmed with grief; but Peel, in spite of his uncomfortable manner, and in spite of his having helped to reduce Prince Albert's allowance from £50,000 to £30,000 per annum, gradually grew in favour, and his Free Trade policy won the ardent support of both the Queen and the Prince. In 1844 she tells King Leopold: "We can't have a better Minister"; she records her "extreme admiration of our worthy Peel." Disraeli said that at this time Peel "reeled under the favour of the Court." It was now clear that there could be good Tories; the Whig spell was broken.

Neither Lord Russell nor Palmerston ever made himself *persona grata* at Court.[9] Palmerston fell into disgrace for his insubordination, and when he fell, public opinion was in his favour and against the Court, "of which" (says Lord Granville's biographer) "it pained John Russell's Whig conscience to think he was now charged with being the creature." There could have been little substance in such a charge, for about this time his own friends were complaining that he was "careless and indifferent in his relations to the Court." He seemed perpetually to have in mind the sentiment of the Whig toast: "The King, and may he never forget those principles which placed his family on the Throne!" Even Melbourne had thought it proper to temper the Queen's admiration of Highlanders: "It is also, as your Majesty says, most striking to contemplate in the Clans the remains of feudal times and institutions. It is quite as well, however, particularly for

Monarchy, that they are but remains, and that no more of them have been left." But Russell made the fatal mistake of eternally inculcating pure Whig doctrine. The figure 1688 quite obsessed his mind, as King Charles's head obsessed Mr Dick's. The Queen once asked him whether he had ever taught that disobedience to a Sovereign could be lawful; he replied: "Well, speaking to a Sovereign of the House of Hanover, I can only answer in the affirmative." This answer has been applauded by Whig writers, but what could be more tactless than thus to suggest to the Queen that her House was of an inferior authority? In 1860, the Queen having expressed her view that Sardinia, as well as other Powers, should be asked not to interfere in Italy, he went out of his way to reply that the doctrines of the Revolution of 1688 had been adopted by statesmen of both parties, and "according to these doctrines, all power held by Sovereigns may be forfeited by misconduct, and each nation is the judge of its own internal government." Her reply came the same day: "The Queen cannot make out what the doctrines of the Revolution of 1688 can have to do with this, or how it would necessitate Lord John to abjure them." A few months later Russell makes comparison between the assistance given by the King of Sardinia to the people of the Two Sicilies and that given by "the best men in England to overthrow the tyranny of James II. —an attempt which has received the applause of all our great public writers, and is the origin of our present form of Government." The Queen had once indeed told Macaulay that "she had nothing to say for her poor ancestor James the Second," but here she refused to admit that Russell's case was a parallel, and replied, again on the same day: "If William III. had made England a Province of Holland he would not have received the applause Lord John quotes." And surely it is difficult enough for a nation to decide when it is lawful to resist its own rulers, without having to decide the case for a foreign country. It is quite evident that this eminent Whig gratuitously annoyed the Queen by constantly harping on the Glorious Revolution, and that she

would have cordially endorsed the sentiments of John Bright: "I wish the noble Lord could blot out from his recollection for a little time William III. and all the remembrance of what has been called by the right honourable Member for Buckinghamshire [Disraeli] 'The Dutch Conquest,' which is supposed to have enthroned the Whig aristocracy in this country." [10]

The Queen, jealous of her power and prerogative, instinctively recognized that the Whigs were also still jealous of Monarchy, that it was still a Whig principle that the Sovereign ought to be a puppet whose strings were pulled by Whig hands; but the Whigs found that neither Queen Victoria nor Prince Albert was so amenable as George the First. The Whigs, as Sir William Harcourt said, were the Bourbons of politics, who learned nothing and forgot nothing. Their attitude to the Queen was according to their tradition.

In dealing with the Radicals they had not even tradition to guide them. In this relation they behaved with a most impolitic lack of wisdom, always treating them *de haut en bas*. They were in fact congenitally incapable of understanding Radicals or Radicalism. Sir William Harcourt said that Whiggism trying to translate itself into Liberalism was like an old mail-coachman trying to turn stoker; Cobbett compared the union of the two parties to a man and wife "led to church in a halter." At first the Whig was inclined to hope that the Radical would be ever his humble servant to command. Bulwer Lytton writes to Durham early in 1835:

"At Lord Holland's the other day one or two of the old set were saying that 'when they had beaten the Tories, there might be some difficulty in handsomely getting rid of the Radicals' (by which designation they mean, I suppose, everyone who sees an inch further than they do). 'Not at all,' said the old lady; 'the Radicals have behaved very well. They are now thoroughly convinced of their former impatience, etc., etc., only want to return exactly the same

men, and will give them more indulgence in future as to their measures.' "

But Lytton was more far-seeing than Lady Holland. He saw that the Radicals would not for long consent to serve on such self-effacing terms :

" It is vain to say to a servant : ' I am a much better master than Mr So-and-so ; I shall be very kind, very indulgent, but there is one thing you must promise—you must never talk to me about wages. They are not even an open question. You will have the pleasure of serving a much better master than you can get anywhere else, but it must be for nothing.' "

The Radicals soon grew tired of being the honorary hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Whigs. The short administration of Peel in the winter of 1834-1835 strengthened them. " The Radicals," wrote Carlyle to his mother, " have made an enormous advance by the little Tory interregnum. . . . Meanwhile these poor Melbourne people will be obliged to walk on at a quicker pace than formerly (considerably against their will, I believe), with the Radical bayonets pricking them behind." Moreover, the Radicals were not all humble plebeians ; Durham and Molesworth and Buller and Charles Villiers were found in their ranks, and expressed themselves with a patrician candour. " Neither the Crown nor the Church is in danger," said Durham at the Newcastle banquet in November 1834, " but I will tell you what is in danger ; it is the Oligarchy." He declared for shorter Parliaments, Household Suffrage and the Ballot, and we may well believe his biographer when he says that the Newcastle speech " was not at all to the mind of the official Whig leaders " ; nor was Durham given office when the Whigs returned to office in 1835. Buller described the Whigs as " a heartless, spiritless *canaille*." Molesworth, like Buller, was a member of the philosophic-Radical party, but his abuse of the Whigs went beyond the calm of a philosopher. They were " miserable brutes " ; " slippery dogs " ; " there is but one opinion with regard to the present administration [Melbourne's of

1835]; that they are the miserablest brutes that God Almighty ever put guts into." "I think the Whigs miserable wretches," he writes to Mrs Grote in 1837, "and shall rejoice when I hear their death-shriek." It was in order to annoy and harm the Whigs that he helped to found the Reform Club.

The middle-class Radicals were equally contumacious. At the close of 1836 they were threatening Melbourne with dire consequences if he did not adopt the most drastic measures of reform. They were under no illusions as to Whig intentions. "In the matter of municipal institutions," wrote Cobden in 1838, "their hearts are against us"; and in 1848 they are "the allies of the aristocracy rather than of the people." In 1844, when the Anti-Corn Law League quarrelled with the official Whigs, John Bright told McLaren "they are an infatuated and imbecile party, and are every day working their own destruction." Scatcherd, the Radical, in Trollope's *Doctor Thorne*, maintained that "the Conservatives should be laughed at as fools, but the Whigs should be hated as knaves."

Both Cobden and Bright provided problems for the Whig managers. It is not surprising that the Whigs were lukewarm in the Anti-Corn Law agitation, for they were great landowners; Grey's Ministry is said to have represented a larger acreage than any of its predecessors. Russell's famous Edinburgh letter of November 1845, in which he abandoned the old Whig idea of a fixed duty on corn, was almost as much of a *volte-face* as the conversion of Peel. In 1841 Russell reported to the Queen from the House of Commons "a powerful speech from Mr Cobden, a manufacturer." In five years the "manufacturer" had become such a mighty political force that we find Russell informing Prince Albert that "Sir Robert Peel, by his speech and his special mention of Mr Cobden as the person who had carried the great measure, had made it very difficult for Lord John not to offer office to Mr Cobden. The Whigs were already accused of being exclusive, and reaping the harvest of other people's work. The only thing he could

offer would be a *Cabinet* office." Cobden was then going abroad, and Russell (at Clarendon's suggestion) wrote that for that reason he would not offer him office; he was evidently embarrassed about admitting the "manufacturer" into the Cabinet, but did express a hope that Cobden might come into it on his return. In 1859 Palmerston made a genuine but vain effort to persuade him to become a Cabinet Minister. In the same year Palmerston declined to admit Bright on the ground of his public speeches,[11] and the Queen refused to make him a Privy Councillor, alleging "his systematic attacks upon the institutions of the country." Four years previously Bright himself had said, "My taking Cabinet office would have been deemed little less than a revolution"; but this was during the Crimean War and at the height of his unpopularity. London society was quite shocked in 1867, when Russell invited Bright to dinner; Granville, a true gentleman, must have administered another shock by making a point of walking with him arm-in-arm down Parliament Street. Sensible Whigs now realized that it was time to mitigate both their social and political pride. Bright's apotheosis took place in 1868, when he went with Granville to Osborne on his appointment as President of the Board of Trade. Granville's letter to Gladstone giving an account of this expedition is full of rich humour, which we hope was appreciated by the recipient. We read how Bright "flirted violently" with Lady Granville in the train, and while crossing the Solent "was mean enough to pump the open-hearted captain on the extravagances connected with the royal yacht." At dinner he won the Queen's heart by talking of children—"the old *roué* evidently touched some feminine chord, for she was much pleased with him; and saw him again the next morning." Granville had even taken care that his colleague should be properly arrayed for this great occasion: "I called for him at dinner-time—his dress was irreproachable, after he had readily agreed to take off a pair of bridal white gloves. He was rather pleased, quoted his tailor's approval of tights, and acknowledged he had

promised to rehearse the costume before his wife and daughter." [12] There could have been no more amiable Whig than Granville, none more free from Whig stiffness ; but there was policy in these attentions, for it was important to the Ministry that the first impression made by this formidable Radical on the Queen should be a favourable one.

The Whig attitude to Gladstone was of a very different character. A Whig peer described him as " not bred in our kennel." He came to them from Toryism viâ Peelism and *en route* for demagogism. He was by origin a man of the middle classes, but his Eton and Oxford education, and, still more, his dominant character and his eagle eye, took him out of the category of Cross and W. H. Smith. The Whigs did not despise Gladstone ; they feared him. They feared him, it has been said, as the old English Catholics feared Manning. In March 1860 " Phillimore met a parliamentary friend who like everybody else talked of Gladstone, and confirmed the apprehension that the Whigs obeyed and trembled and were frightened to death. ' We don't know where he is leading us,' said Hayter, who had been whipper-in." [13] He was said to be hated at Brooks's worse than at the Carlton. Gladstone himself, on the second reading of the Reform Bill of 1866, spoke with gratitude of his admission to the Liberal Party :

" I came among you, to make use of the legal phraseology, *in formâ pauperis*. I had nothing to offer you but faithful and honourable service. You received me as Dido received the shipwrecked Æneas—

> ' . . . Ejectum littore, egentem
> Excepi,'

and I only trust you may not hereafter at any time have to complete the sentence in regard to me—

> ' Et regni demens in parte locavi.' " [14]

If the Whig supporters of Russell's Government could then have foreseen the events of twenty years later they would have realized how dreadfully apt was the conclusion

of Virgil's line. For Æneas did not more certainly break the heart of Dido than did Gladstone's Irish policy in 1886 break up for ever the feeble remnants of Whiggism. "Funeris heu tibi causa fui."

Gladstone at different periods of his career was a Tory, a Liberal and a Radical, but never a Whig; least of all was he a Whig in the matter of Parliamentary Reform. When the Whigs were carrying the Reform Bill he thought it savoured of Antichrist; thirty years later he was horrifying the Whigs by an utterance that seemed to advocate Universal Suffrage. The orthodox Whigs of 1832 professed to believe that the great Bill had once for all settled the Reform question; but there were some qualifications. Macaulay said in the House of Commons (5th July 1831): "I ask you whether you think that any Reform Bill which you can frame will be final. . . . Another generation may find in the new representative system defects such as we find in the old representative system." Sydney Smith thought that the Bill would last from thirty to forty years, "and that is an eternity in politics." It was only a rebel like Durham who acknowledged the "many imperfections" of the Bill and the need of remedying them. In 1837 Russell declared that the Whigs meant the Bill to be a final measure, and this declaration stimulated the Chartist agitation which was one of the trials of Melbourne's Administration; the Whigs were at this time definitely ranged against any popular movement for an extended franchise. In 1848 Palmerston deprecated an "inconvenient extension of franchise" as mischievous. By this time a Redistribution Reform, at any rate, had become easily arguable; Salford, for instance, with 2602 electors had one member; Lymington, with 324, had two; Dewsbury, with a population of 71,768, had none; Manchester and Marylebone had no more representation than Lymington and Lewes.

But less than twenty years after the Bill had passed the "finality" theory was dead. In 1851 "Finality Jack" himself, now Prime Minister, was submitting a new measure

of Reform to a committee of the Cabinet. This was opposed by his brother, the Duke of Bedford; Lord Lansdowne declared that "if any strong measure was contemplated by the Cabinet, I should immediately walk out of it." Early in 1852 Palmerston's "Tit-for-Tat" turned Russell out of office; in August Greville describes Lansdowne and other Whigs as vehemently opposed to Reform, Palmerston as also against it, and Russell as "entirely and irrevocably committed." In Russell's mind Reform was now an *idée fixe*; on the eve of the Crimean War he was referring another scheme to another Cabinet committee, consisting of himself, Palmerston, Granville, Newcastle, Grey and Wood, and this time Palmerston alone was thought to be standing out. Greville, a cautious Whig, now propounds in his Diary a view that the very success of the great Bill was dangerous because it had engendered an opinion that "progress, as it is called, is not only necessary, but perfectly safe." Lansdowne was still believed to be adverse; Palmerston resigned, but withdrew his resignation. In April 1854 after much entreaty, and after war had been actually declared, Russell was induced to withdraw his Bill.

The next official Bill was introduced by Disraeli in 1859, its main provision being the assimilation of the County to the Borough franchise. Russell carried an amendment to the Second Reading, denouncing the omission of any reduction of the Borough franchise. Disraeli resigned and the Whigs, after a General Election, regained office.

Russell's Bill of 1860—which would have reduced the Borough qualification from £10 to £6—received no encouragement from Palmerston, and was never seriously pressed. Palmerston could safely disregard it, for, as Russell admitted to him in November 1860, not one of these Bills had excited the least popular enthusiasm. It would appear that Russell, after the manner of a recent Secretary of State for India, was striving to stir the voteless English working man out of his "pathetic content." There were no more Government Reform Bills till after Palmerston's death.

But in May 1864, speaking on a Private Member's Bill

for lowering the franchise, Gladstone uttered these portentous words :

" I call upon the adversary to show cause, and I venture to say that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or of political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution."

" The radicals," says his biographer, " were as jubilant as whigs and tories were furious." The next day Palmerston wrote to him : " You lay down broadly the doctrine of universal suffrage which I can never accept. I entirely deny that every sane and not disqualified man has a moral right to a vote." [15] Gladstone replied, with his usual refinements, disclaiming Palmerston's interpretation of his meaning.

Russell, meanwhile, still cherished his Reform project. We find in *Punch* (24th March 1866) some verses ridiculing his persistence and suggesting that the nation was still indifferent :

> " An ancient shepherd, hight John Russell,
> Once stout, though now sore shrunk in muscle,
> Summoned, one day, his flock together,
> Under the lead of their bell-wether—
> ' Dear sheep,' quoth he, ' Reform is needed ;
> I tried it once, and it succeeded.
> Your wool's improved and more's got off it,
> Till each year's clip brings larger profit.
> Now, if Reform Bill number one
> For fleece and flesh so much has done,
> Think what ideal wool and mutton
> Bill number two your backs will put on.
> So to Reform what say you ?—Ha ? '
> The sheep responsive bleated ' Baa ! ' "

But the " pathetic content " was now giving way to John Bright's oratory, and at last the demand for Reform became insistent. Bright's language was strong : " The working men are almost universally excluded roughly and insolently from political power." Bright, though he did not think it went

far enough, supported the Liberal Bill of 1866 ; the Whigs did not dare to oppose it directly, but they moved Amendments and Instructions, and in the end " defeated the Bill and turned out the Government, and had done it without giving a single vote which could be quoted against them in the constituencies." [16] Their champion, Robert Lowe, was not a Whig but an " anti-democratic Liberal of a more modern type." His following has been described by Mr Trevelyan (in his *Life of John Bright*) as " a last rally of the Aristocrats of the Whig decadence." The Whigs, having once more defeated Reform, once more refused any coalition with the Tories. The next year Disraeli suddenly and surprisingly accepted the Compound Householder as a voter and passed his Reform Bill : Whig hate of Gladstone helped the Tories to carry Reform through Parliament.

This is a very condensed account of Whig dealings with Reform between 1832 and 1867, and omits the details of the various proposals for lowering the vote-qualification.[17] But we need not attach much importance to these variations, nor to Disraeli's ingenious expedients—his " fancy " franchises, and " vertical " and " lateral " extensions. All these were overlaid by an atmosphere of insincerity. Very many who supported these Bills, whether Whig or Tory, did not want them passed ; both parties feared the advance of Democracy.

We are concerned here with the general strategy of the Whigs, and in reading the history of these five-and-thirty years we are struck first of all by their folly if they really believed that the Bill of 1832 could be a lasting settlement. It was surely obvious to the veriest political tyro that the rapid increase in population must shortly lead to a demand for a redistribution of seats. As for the householder's qualification, there was clearly no reason in the nature of things why a privilege granted to a Ten-Pounder should be withheld from a Nine-Pounder or an Eight-Pounder. A very intelligent Nine-Pounder might be living in a house that was insufficiently assessed. Still more illogical were the Reformers who fortified their arguments for a limited extension

by sentimental appeals. When Gladstone thundered against the iniquity of excluding " our own flesh and blood " it was pertinently inquired why kinship in flesh and blood should be strictly limited to a £7 rental. To make such appeals was an overpowering temptation to every ambitious politician. The Radical, who used the Bill of 1832 as a lever, was wise in his generation ; the Duke of Wellington, who feared that the Bill would be so used—and about whom was written the rhyme :

" If I say A, I might say B,
And so go on to C and D ;
And so no end I see there'd be,
If I but once say A B C."

—was justified of his fears. But the Whig, who thought the Bill would be a final settlement, was incapable of political philosophy. Even the constitution of 1688 was not for all time ; but it lasted nearly a century and a half. The figure 1832, too, had its worshippers ; but there was nothing sacrosanct in the figures 1867 or 1884.

Remarkable also was the impotence of the Whigs to agree upon a post-1832 Reform policy, and even to perceive that such an agreement was essential to the survival of Whigdom. When, owing to the growth of public opinion, it became imperative that this question must be reopened, some Whigs wanted to go forward and some to mark time. The simplest of voters could see that Palmerston was for marking time. Rowcliffe the butcher dealt with him faithfully at the Tiverton by-election (1861) :

" You come to Tiverton to gull the people, but you don't gull me. I have given the Whigs a long trial, but now I throw them over. Go back to Downing Street, and bring in an honest Reform Bill, and let us have no more double-shuffle." The party was a scene of dissension and jealousy and intrigue ; even Woburn was divided against itself. Still more violent was the Whig jealousy of Tory efforts at Reform. Codlin was the friend, not Short ; with Short, Codlin would on no account co-operate. It was only

human nature that Short in the end should feel a peculiar satisfaction in " dishing " Codlin.

But the unwisdom of the Whigs reached its climax in the tactics they applied to the Russell-Gladstone Bill of 1866, when they were

" Willing to wound and yet afraid to strike."

The most simple-minded observer could see that they both feared Reform and feared to oppose Reform. Their action, or inaction, on this occasion, it has truly been said, " determined the final extinction of the party as a political power in England." Lord Salisbury justly condemned it as " a cunning device for avoiding a manly performance of public duty." The old Whigs were in their hearts opposed to an increase of voters. They did *not* believe that every man had a right to a vote ; they were as sceptical as Ecclesiasticus of the political competence of the working man : " How can he get wisdom that worketh the plough, and that glorieth in the goad ; that driveth oxen ; and is occupied in their labours ; and whose talk is in bullocks ? . . . They cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken." In their hearts they agreed with Burke that " such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression from the State ; but that the State suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted to rule." Their protagonist, Robert Lowe, had the courage—or the hardihood—to impute to " such descriptions of men " not only mental but moral inferiority : " If you wanted venality, ignorance, drunkenness—if you wanted impulsive, unreflecting, violent people—where do you look for them ? Do you go to the top or to the bottom ? " It had become almost impossible to say such things, and survive politically. Lowe was afterwards obliged to look for a seat in a new academic constituency—the University of London ; but the reckless rhetoric of this " anti-democratic Liberal " was not more fatal to the party than the trimming and dissimulation of the old anti-democratic Whig.

So it was left to Disraeli to carry the second Reform Bill,

but Gladstone in the succeeding year drove him out of office by his successful agitation against the Irish Church. An attack on this stronghold of Protestantism must have given pause to many old-fashioned Whigs. In the House of Commons they listened to his "Resolutions" in coldness and silence, though the Radicals below the gangway cheered loudly. Russell by no means saw eye to eye with Gladstone, and wished to retain for the Church an income of £250,000 per annum. "These elections," wrote Lowe to Granville, "will be a complete Waterloo for the Tories; but how long will the Whigs survive them?" The Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire, envisaging perhaps how dubious was the prospect for Whigs, refused to subscribe to the election funds.

We may here for a few pages travel beyond the Transition period, and find the answer to Lowe's question of 1868—"How long will the Whigs survive?" [18] It is true there was a strong Whig element in Gladstone's first Cabinet: Ripon, Kimberley, Argyll, Clarendon, Granville and Hartington. According to Lord Morley, Gladstone "found his most congenial adherents rather among the patrician Whigs than among the men labelled as advanced"; but, though these great Whigs still sat in the seats of the mighty, it was remarked that this Parliament "exhibited a profound change in the social tone of the House. The supremacy of the governing families had gone." Whiggism, not being a "creed," but a "caste," provided no inspiration for a youthful politician. In 1863 W. E. Forster, then fresh to the House of Commons, noticed that there were no new Whigs, and that the old Whigs were worn out. The Nonconformists were now the backbone of the Liberal party, and they had a definite programme, both religious and educational. And yet the Whigs could still act "in corps." We read in the *Life of Disraeli* of an occasion early in 1872 when the Government was in difficulties and the "old Whigs" met at Brooks's and decided to come to the rescue. In January 1874 the aged Russell was still maintaining that "the Liberal party, if it is to be a party

again, must be the Whig party." Unfortunately for this view the very masterful man who was the *de facto* head of the Liberal Party did not happen to be a Whig.

When Disraeli at last came into power as well as office, and Gladstone retired from the Liberal leadership, the Whigs began to hope again. Harcourt wrote to Bramwell (1874): "I am and always have been and always shall be a *Whig*, which I take to be the faith of all sensible Englishmen. The great vice of Gladstone is that he has never understood Whig principles and never will. If the Liberal party is to be reconstructed, it must be on that platform"; and to Hartington (1875): "It depends entirely upon your pluck and determination whether the Whig or Radical flag is to be hoisted to the fore." He estimated the Liberal opposition at this time at 70 Radicals, 70 Home Rulers, and about 150 Whigs. But these hopes were dashed when Gladstone returned to activity, and began his agitation against the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria. Granville and Hartington were believed to view this agitation coldly. According to Disraeli, Hartington highly disapproved of Gladstone's pamphlets and Lowe's speeches; at a time when Gladstone was denouncing the Prime Minister, Hartington sent him four brace of grouse from Bolton Abbey. This Whig of Whigs declined to address an anti-atrocity meeting because it was likely to be attended by "innumerable parsons . . . the number of the latter on the list is quite enough for me." Harcourt at this time was a true Whig in his hatred of interference with personal liberty. "I am against putting people to bed who want to sit up," he declared at Oxford (30th December 1872), "I am against forbidding a man to have a glass of beer if he wants to have a glass of beer. I am against public-house restriction and park regulations. I don't approve Mr Ayrton making it a misdemeanour to use soap in bathing."

Gladstone returned to power in 1880, and with him Spencer, Argyll, Harcourt, Granville and Hartington. His Cabinet was said to be three-quarters Whig and one-quarter Radical, while the Liberal Party in the country was three-

quarters Radical and one-quarter Whig. As to the House of Commons, Beaconsfield told the Queen that Gladstone's majority consisted of 200 Whigs and 190 Radicals and Home Rulers. Again it was the Radicals who supplied the driving power, while the Irish could nullify any Whig revolt. "I have no faith whatever in the Whig defeat on the Land Bill," wrote Beaconsfield to Lady Bradford (4th July 1880)—"the most dangerous thing that has happened in my time—now a long experience. The Fenian Members will, by their numbers, compensate the A. V. [Arch Villain] for the Whig defection. The Whigs may be indignant, but they are pusillanimous." Lord Salisbury was understood to be the author of an article which appeared in *The Quarterly Review* (October 1883) wherein was written: "The present Whig Party is a mere survival, kept alive by tradition after its true functions and significance have passed away." A Whig must change his opinions "at the bidding of the leader whom the Radical Party may have chosen for him." Hartington admitted that "the Whigs are not the leaders in popular movements, but the Whigs have been able, as I think, to the great advantage of the country, to direct, and guide, and moderate those popular movements." Hartington's admission seems consistent with Salisbury's contention.

In January 1886 Gladstone drafted a Memorandum about examining the practicability of a legislative body in Dublin. This was the end: the Whigs left Gladstone, and this great and ancient party ceased to have a separate existence. "Since 1886," writes the Duke of Devonshire's biographer, "the word has been used in a purely historical sense, while 'Tory' has still a living meaning. The Whig Party, as a concrete reality, had a history of as nearly as possible 200 years."

Individual Whigs survived their party and no doubt exercised a Whiggish influence on political affairs. It was at first hard to separate from Whig traditions; Lord Lansdowne in 1886 declined the Colonial Office from a distaste against sitting amongst Tory peers. Rosebery and

Spencer rallied to Gladstone in 1892 ; Whiggism was dead, but they remained loyal to their old leader. Even a Russell was to be found amongst his subordinate ministers. Harcourt, too, was his lieutenant ; but was he now a Whig ? He proclaimed himself to be, like everyone else, a socialist ; and the Nonconformist Conscience was hindering his old Whig love of liberty. He was no longer for allowing a man " to have a glass of beer when he wants a glass of beer " ; he was obliged to introduce a Local Veto Bill. But in his heart Harcourt was always a Whig of the eighteenth century : " I would like to go back, I would like to have been a member of the Cabinet of Sir Robert Walpole . . . I am a thorough eighteenth-century man in disposition, education, sentiment and connexion." And he praised Hartington as highly as one Whig could praise another. " He is almost worthy to have lived in the eighteenth century." [19]

For the true Whig belonged to the eighteenth century—to the hundred years which began with our own " Glorious Revolution " and ended with a very different sort of Revolution in France. Against the ideas of 1789 Burke made his " Appeal from the New Whigs to the Old." But Whigs Old and New joined in passing the Bill of 1832. In time they discovered that this could not be a settlement of the Constitution ; but they were afraid to go further, and some of them contrived to kill Russell's Bill of 1866 ; by Amendments they thought they could sweep back the rising tide of democracy, and they deserved to be caricatured as the political Mrs Partington quite as much as the Duke of Wellington did five-and-thirty years before. " Progress " was in the air—" Progress as it is called," sneered the Whig Greville ; but progress was never a Whig notion. The old Whigs were static. " The awful Author of our being," said Burke, " is the Author of our place in the order of existence." Of liberty the Whigs were champions, but not of equality ; they believed that

> " Order is Heaven's first law ; and, this confest,
> Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,"

and that our civil liberties were inseparably connected with the domination of the great Whig houses. In the religious sphere they applied to Dissenters and Roman Catholics the principle not of equality but of toleration; it was vital to Whiggism that Protestantism should be supreme. Fraternity they practised only amongst themselves; they were jealous of the Throne, and haughty to their social inferiors. With the Tories they would have no dealings; as late as 1878 the Duke of Bedford forbade his brother, because he was a Whig and a Russell, to accept a peerage from Beaconsfield for his diplomatic services.

Their habit of secrecy and their disposition to confine their counsels to an inner circle savoured of those far-off days when they were conspirators, when seven Whigs sent the invitation in cipher to William of Orange, and Edward Russell impressed on him that the number of those initiated must be small. All Whig conferences seem to partake of this mystery and limitation—down to the Juntos at Lansdowne House in the "thirties" and the conclaves at Brooks's in the "seventies." Can one imagine a mass-meeting of Whigs?

Whiggism was in its essence aristocratical, and aristocracy during this period was gradually failing. In the Tory Party it was still a powerful—perhaps the most powerful — element, and supplied nearly all the brains and direction. But in the Liberal Party the aristocratic element was becoming an anachronism, an impossibility, a thing suspect; its secession, in the nature of things inevitable, was now only a matter of time. The Whigs, once the undisputed rulers of the country, still grasped their share—more than their just share—of high office; but in reality they were only the barely tolerated wing of a party whose leader cared nothing for their traditions, while his more ardent followers, impatient with these dignified and cautious colleagues, ungratefully forgot that all reform was based on the solid and ancient foundation of Whig achievement, and that Gladstonian "Progress" was only possible because the Whigs, two centuries ago,

had boldly withstood Absolute Power, and made Law supreme in England,

ὅτε τὸν τύραννον κτανέτην
ἰσονόμους τ' Ἀθήνας ἐποιησάτην.

NOTES

[1] In 1854 Stockmar warned the Prince Consort that the English Whigs were "nothing but partly conscious, partly unconscious republicans, who stand in the same relation to the Throne as the wolf does to the lamb."

[2] The plea of Necessity was urged (in the case of the *Mignonette*, 1884) on behalf of two shipwrecked seamen, who killed and ate a boy after spending eighteen days in an open boat. Lord Chief Justice Coleridge disallowed it, quoting Milton :

> "Thus spake the Fiend, and with Necessity,
> The Tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds."

[3] *Collections and Recollections* (G. W. E. Russell), p. 195.

[4] *In Whig Society* (Countess of Airlie), p. xiv.

[5] The author, who answers to the same description, cannot help sympathizing with Mr Giles. Besides being a Hertfordshire brewer, Mr Giles was Governor of the Bank of England.

[6] *The Passing of the Great Reform Bill* (J. R. M. Butler), p. 54.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

[8] *Supra*, p. 114.

[9] As late as 1864 she writes of them to King Leopold as "those two dreadful old men." Again, "Pilgerstein [Palmerston] is gouty, and extremely impertinent in his communications of different kinds to me."

[10] Speech in House of Commons, 7th June 1855.

[11] In 1866 Gladstone was complaining of Bright's mass-meetings ! "*Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes ?*"

[12] *Life of Lord Granville* (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), vol. i., p. 540.

[13] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i., p. 29.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 204.

[15] After reading Gladstone's speech the Queen wrote to Palmerston : "The Queen sincerely trusts that this imprudent declaration may not produce the agitation in the country which it is calculated to do."

[16] *Lord Salisbury* (Lady Gwendolen Cecil), vol. i., p. 194.

[17] Most of these may be found in Lord Lytton's *Life of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton*, vol. ii., pp. 311-312. Lady Gwendolen

Cecil's chapter on Parliamentary Reform in her Life of *Lord Salisbury* (vol. i., chap. vi.) is an excellent summary.

[18] Already, in 1866, John Morley (in *The Fortnightly Review*) had pronounced them to be "extinct" (*Early Life and Letters of John Morley*, vol. i., p. 78.

[19] Sir Almeric FitzRoy in his *Memoirs* (vol. ii., p. 494) states that our present King told Lord Morley in 1912 that he considered him to be the only representative of the old Whigs left in the Cabinet. What would Burke have thought of Lord Morley as a Whig ?

VI

THE QUEEN & THE PRINCE CONSORT

Queen Victoria's Predecessors, George the Fourth & William the Fourth—William the Fourth's Want of Dignity—George the Third's other Sons—Queen Victoria's Beauty—Early Unpopularity — Domestic Virtues — Modern Depreciation of Queen Victoria & Tennyson—Her Conscientiousness—Her Firmness—Her Resemblance to George the Third—Her Courage, Patriotism, Sentimentality — Prince Albert's Germanism (but Loyalty to England)—His Zeal for a United Germany—Stockmar on the English Constitution — Observations thereon — Suspicions of Court (Clarendon & Others) — Court *v.* Aristocracy — Queen Victoria & Prince Albert as Free Traders—Prince Albert as Chancellor of Cambridge University—Prince Albert & the Army — Wellington & Sandhurst — Prince Albert an "Admirable Crichton"—His Ability & Eminence—Prince Albert & Aristocracy—Against Party—Attitude to Middle Classes—He elevates the Throne — Queen Victoria after Prince Albert's Death — Disillusioned with Germany—Her Prestige

FIVE years after that great event, of which the ultimate effect was to withdraw power from the aristocracy, Queen Victoria came to the throne. Then, contrary to all the theories and calculations of Whig and Liberal, Radical and Revolutionary, Monarchy began slowly to renew its strength. This it still maintains. The Throne is now a breakwater against the periodic flood-tides of democracy and the fiercer and more incessant waves of anarchy.

It was indeed time for a revival to take place, for Monarchy had sunk low in popular estimation. The character of the Regent had strained the loyalty of the nation; it is possible that the Throne had never been in greater danger than during Queen Caroline's trial, when even the Guards showed signs of disaffection. At the time of the Reform Bill agitation many eminent men thought that our English Monarchy was doomed.

The delinquencies and follies of Queen Victoria's two predecessors are well known. There is much that is sordid and much that is comic in the revelations of Creevey and Greville ; in what is recorded of George the Fourth there is little that is not sordid. "Theer was one thing, and one thing only, that he regarded, and that was himself," wrote Roebuck, who compares the Windsor of this reign to Capreæ, and George to Tiberius. The Hunts were prosecuted in 1810 for describing him as "a man who had just closed half-a-century without one single claim to the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity." Greville pronounced this verdict on his Court : "A more despicable scene cannot be exhibited than that which the interior of our Court presents—every base, low, and unmanly propensity, with selfishness, avarice, and a life of petty intrigue and mystery."

The character of William the Fourth was more amiable ; but it is very doubtful whether this very amiability, as it usually expressed itself by an utter lack of dignity, did not bring Monarchy into still greater contempt. George, though he shocked "grave men" by driving with a groom in a tilbury, behaved in general like a King. He was capable of being very courteous ; he was not offended by Wilberforce's pious "launchers," but asked him to dinner and assured him "that he should hear nothing in his house to give him pain." G. W. E. Russell, quoting the testimony of those who had served him as Regent and King, says : "He was magnificent, sumptuous, stately ; and those qualities, as we have lately seen, attract the multitude. His manner, when he chose, could be perfection—majestic and yet benignant, chivalrous with women, playful with children, gracious and cordial with men." Lord Aberdeen said : "He certainly could be the most polished of gentlemen, or the exact opposite." It must be said of William the Fourth that he was generally "the exact opposite."

Roebuck gave William a bad character : "Lord Brougham is accustomed to describe William the Fourth as frank, just and straightforward. I believe him to have been very weak

and very false, a finished dissembler, and " (here perhaps is the explanation of Roebuck's *animus*) " always bitterly hostile to the Whig ministry and their great measure of Reform." He did not like Reform, and, when he tried to break off from Grey to Wellington, was denounced as " false, fleeting, perjured Clarence." [1] He did not like Whigs ; when Longley did homage for the see of Ripon the King addressed him : " Bishop of Ripon, I charge you as you shall answer before Almighty God, that you never by word or deed give encouragement to those d——d Whigs, who would upset the Church of England." But he tried to act constitutionally in his relations to the Whig Party and the Reform Bill. That he was well-meaning and conscientious we have the witness of Disraeli : " He was a good man ; with feelings and sympathies ; deficient in culture rather than ability ; with a sense of duty " ; and of Queen Victoria : " Whatever his faults may have been, it was well known that he was not only zealous but most conscientious in the discharge of his duties as King. He had a truly kind heart, and was most anxious to do what was right."

But—and this is fatal in a King—his manners were not kingly. On one occasion, while driving back from the closing of Parliament, he was seen to spit out of the carriage window ; a voice was heard from the mob : " George the Fourth would never have done that ! " He grossly insulted the Duchess of Kent, a guest at his own table. Sometimes his oddness is fantastic ; he seems like the King of fairy tale or pantomime. After dinner he dances a country-dance with Lord Amelius Beauclerk, an elderly Admiral.[2] He dismisses his guests at 11 P.M. : " Now, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you a good night. I will not detain you any longer from your amusements, and shall go to my own, which is to go to bed ; so come along, my Queen." Strangest of all was his idea of " commemorating " the death of his brother the Duke of York ; for this melancholy purpose he planned a dinner on the following lines : " Officers to be in uniform, with crape on their arms. The dinner, including wine, etc., 30s. a head."

"It is one of the great evils of the recent convulsion," wrote Greville in 1832, "that the King's imbecility has been exposed to the world, and in his person the regal authority has fallen into contempt; his own personal unpopularity is not of much consequence as long as it does not degrade his office; that of George IV. never did; so little so that he could always as King cancel the bad impressions which he made in his individual capacity." Nor did the other royal brothers redeem the prestige of their House. The Duke of Wellington told Creevey (1818) that he was not surprised at the House of Commons refusing to increase the allowances of the Dukes of Clarence, Kent and Cumberland, upon their marriages: "By God! there is a great deal to be said about that. They [the Princes] are the damnedest millstone about the necks of any Government that can be imagined. They have insulted—*personally* insulted—two-thirds of the gentlemen of England, and how can it be wondered at that they take their revenge upon them when they get them in the House of Commons? It is their only opportunity, and I think, by God! they are quite right to use it."

The vices and vagaries of the two previous Kings and their brothers had lowered respect for the Throne. Years after, when Reeve published the *Journals* of Greville, and revealed the characters of her uncles, Queen Victoria was very angry; but Reeve was impenitent, and defended the publication on the ground that it had elevated Royalty by the contrast. The contrast between the eccentric and selfish old Princes and their youthful niece was striking enough; she reaped the benefit of their unpopularity. Charles the Second told his brother: "They will never kill me to make you King." King Leopold wrote to Victoria, just before her accession: "Your immediate successor with the mustaches is enough to frighten them [the Whigs] into the most violent attachment for you"—the mustachioed one being the Duke of Cumberland, who was an object of peculiar fear and detestation—especially to Whigs. Then the new Queen had not only youth and natural dignity to recommend her,

but great charm—amounting almost to beauty. To this many testified. Carlyle: "A pretty-looking little creature"; Bulwer Lytton: "What grace she has! What fairy royalty!"; Lord Stanhope: "She is far too pretty to be a princess"; Mrs E. M. Ward (in her *Memories of Ninety Years*): "A laughing pretty girl with large blue eyes, sunny hair, and a sweet smile, and one of her many charms was a singularly beautiful voice." Lord Clarendon writes from St Cloud to Lady Clarendon in 1855: "Everybody raves of her grace and dignity, and some go so far as to think her very pretty."

G. W. E. Russell says of those early days that chivalry quenched the flame of revolution: "All Chivalry, in its best and noblest significance, rallied to the defence of the defenceless." The flame of revolution is however too fierce to be thus quenched; it smouldered, as it still smoulders, wherever there is privation and great inequality of fortune. The new reign did not have the effect of increasing the wage of the agricultural labourer. The novel attraction of the young Queen wore off; interest soon declined into indifference. When she opened Parliament in 1837 not a hat was raised. At Ascot in 1838 she received few salutations. Next year occurred the wretched affair of Lady Flora Hastings. "Nobody cares for the Queen," wrote Greville, "her popularity has sunk to zero, and loyalty is a dead letter." But her real unpopularity was with the Tory Party, who resented her complete identification with the Whigs. "I perceive a violent feeling against her on the other side," wrote Beauvale to Lady Cowper (22nd April 1839). "I suppose it is but the being out, and would change if they came in." The rage of party, according to Greville, destroyed the Tory principle of loyalty. "They seem not to care one straw for the Crown, its dignity, or its authority, because the head on which it is placed does not nod with benignity to them." Because the Duchess of Sutherland was Mistress of the Robes the company at a public dinner refused to drink the health of the Duke as Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire. In 1839 we find Croker writing to the Duke of Cumberland (now King of Hanover), depreciating his own Sovereign. Gladstone re-

membered an Eton dinner in 1841 at which the Queen's health was received "with a moderate amount of acclamation, decently and thriftily doled out," and the reason he gives was her "sympathy with the Liberal Government of Lord Melbourne." This was more regrettable than surprising, for the Reform Bill of the Whigs had dealt a mortal blow at the power of aristocracy; and the Tories, seeing the Whigs in the exclusive enjoyment of Royal favour, believed that the Queen also was in opposition to aristocracy. In this they were not mistaken. In time the Queen's regard was transferred from Melbourne to Peel; but it was to the Free Trade Peel, not the Tory Peel. It was not till some time after the death of Prince Albert that she became wholeheartedly a Tory. In 1840 she married a Prince who was always unpopular; but, soon after her marriage, her intrepid behaviour when fired at on Constitution Hill excited great admiration. "The equestrians formed themselves into an escort," wrote Greville, "and attended her back to the Palace, cheering vehemently." In 1844 she could write to King Leopold of the newspapers: "They say *no* Sovereign *was more* loved than I am (I am bold enough to say), and *that*, from our *happy domestic home* . . . which gives such a good example"; but this was pre-eminently the love of the middle classes, who admired her exemplary family life and her virtues as wife and mother.

The good example of this happy home made a deep impression on the nation, but a virtuous conjugal life is not sufficient of itself to make a great monarch. Charles the First, as Macaulay allowed, could boast of domestic virtues such as are inscribed on many a humble tombstone; but this did not save him from disastrous statecraft. The Queen had other qualities more appurtenant to her station; moreover she was married to a Prince of great character and abilities. In all English history has there ever been a King and Queen whose combined personality and faculty for rule have equalled in strength and range those of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert?

Those of us who were brought up in the Victorian period

were taught to look on the Queen as a being perfect in wisdom and goodness. To a Victorian child it was perhaps only her sex that distinguished her from the Deity ; and she was much nearer than God to her people. For she was also very human, and was known to visit them in their lowly cottages, drink tea with them and discuss their simple affairs. We believed also in her might, and that her arms were always victorious ; this must obviously be the case, because, whatever the quarrel, the cause of so good a Queen was bound to be just. To her subjects, if not *dea*, she was at least *diva* ; nor would it be surprising if, like the Roman Emperors, she were actually worshipped in her lifetime by some of the remote tribes who came under her sway.[3] Somewhat similar was our reverence for Tennyson, whose inspired verse glorified the Queen and her Consort, her army and her navy. Just as the Queen was an exemplary wife and mother, and yet the ruler of an Empire ; so Tennyson was an exemplary husband and father, and yet the supreme poet. And these two personages were on affectionate terms ; we felt that this too was as it should be, and that the scheme of things was complete.

This homage and admiration are things of the past. The poet is no longer allowed to be a great poet, and as a thinker he is derided ; he is even proved to have been peevish in his home :

> " The bower we shrined to Tennyson,
> Gentlemen !
> Is roof-wrecked."

Queen Victoria is still regarded as the creator, or at least the incarnation, of her era ; but that era is now very much out of favour. It is denounced as an era of insincerity, narrowmindedness and prudery. The Queen's very human foibles have been exposed ; for her love of her husband and pathetic (if strange and expensive) cult of his memory she has been made almost a laughing-stock. It has been demonstrated how limited was her intelligence, how innocent she was of literature and how devoid of taste in art, how cross

she could be to her Ministers and how formidable to the Prince of Wales. To her conquests and her later Imperialism has even been attributed the horror and misery of the Great War. One of our celebrated writers has descended to a coarseness of invective [4] that should make our rusty Victorian swords leap from their scabbards. In fact, certain modern authors are so violently provoked by her eminence that their language—to use one of her own favourite phrases —is " not always quite discreet."

Between glorification and detraction let us seek that *juste milieu* in which the Queen herself was a firm believer.[5] Her character is not hard to comprehend, for the essence of it was its simplicity. First of all came her conscientiousness, her sense of duty. When as a child she first learnt that it was her destiny to be Queen of England, she said : " I will be good." On the day of her accession she wrote in her Journal :

" Since it has pleased Providence to place me in this station, I shall do my utmost to fulfil my duty towards my country ; I am very young and perhaps in many, though not in all, things inexperienced, but I am sure that very few have more real good will and more real desire to do what is fit and right than I have."

How she kept these resolutions was truly stated in the House of Commons, sixty years later, by Sir William Harcourt :

" There has proved, for two generations of men, one figure who has presented to the world the British name with a noble simplicity of greatness, which has never been known before, and which will live for ever in the records of this nation."

Next is to be noted her firmness of character. " A resolute little Tit," was Creevey's appreciative, if not very respectful, report of her, soon after she came to the Throne. Where their peculiar prejudices or interests are concerned, the firmness of Sovereigns is almost sure to run into obstinacy. The character of Queen Victoria was reminiscent of George the Third's ; in her infancy there was actually a physical

resemblance. "'*C'est l'image du feu Roi*,' exclaimed the Duchess [of Kent]. '*C'est le Roi Georges en jupons*,' echoed the surrounding ladies." [6] Harcourt mentions (1878) "a George-the-Thirdian message which Ponsonby had to deliver to the Chief of the Opposition"; but the following letter might have been sent by George himself to Lord North:

"*Queen Victoria to Viscount Palmerston. Buckingham Palace*, 26th *June* 1856. The Queen hopes Lord Palmerston will make it quite clear to the subordinate Members of the Government that they cannot be allowed to vote against the Government proposal about the National Gallery to-morrow, as she hears that several fancy themselves at liberty to do so."

Again, in her refusal to admit the Prince of Wales to her counsels, the Queen goes near to remind us of the unhappy relations which existed between all the four Georges and their children. Not that there was actual enmity in her heart, nor any lack of loyal affection in the Prince; but there *was* on her side a determination to exclude her son from her counsels, however it may have been founded on a desire to carry out the supposed wishes of the Prince Consort. The Prince of Wales, though he loved, feared his mother.

She also resembled George the Third in her intellectual limitations. In three volumes of her *Letters* we scarcely find one reference to literature or men of letters. She liked Tennyson's simpler poems, and is said to have made him her Poet Laureate because she admired *The Miller's Daughter*. She could not share the Prince Consort's scientific tastes, nor did she care for the company of scientists. In 1859, when the British Association came to Balmoral, it presented itself to her in the form of "four weighty omnibuses filled with scientific men." There was dynastic narrowness in her religious outlook. When Princess Mary of Cambridge declined an offer of marriage from the King of Sardinia, "She puts it on the *right* ground, viz. that of *Protestant feeling* which should *always* actuate our family, and to this we *now must* keep." She had a horror of Ritualists,

and for this cause declined in 1874 to appoint Lord Beauchamp to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. She was much more hostile to Puseyites than to Roman Catholics, and disapproved of Lord John Russell's famous letter of 1850. Her disposition towards Roman Catholics was characteristically just and fair, but was expressed rather oddly: "I cannot bear the violent abuse of the Catholic religion, which is so painful and so cruel towards the many good and innocent Roman Catholics."

Of her straightforwardness and directness there is abundant testimony, not only from attached and loyal members of her own Household, but from Ministers who knew that she disliked them. To her "directness" and "sincerity" a tribute was paid by the Radical *Examiner* in the political crisis of December 1845. Lady Augusta Stanley praises "the honesty, the straightforwardness, the frankness, the impulsiveness," of her mistress. To those she disliked, though she could be cold and distant,[7] she was never discourteous.

She was brave both physically and morally, and she was full of military ardour. "Extinguish in your heart the fiendish love of military glory, from which your sex does not necessarily exempt you." Thus preached Sydney Smith in St Paul's to the young Queen at her accession; but the seed fell on stony ground. Of the battle of Novara and the prowess thereat of an Austrian Archduke she writes to King Leopold: "I could work myself up to a great excitement about these exploits, for there is nothing I admire more than great military exploits and daring." She is enthusiastic over her navy: "I think it is in these immense wooden walls that our real greatness exists, and I am proud to think that no *other* nation *can* equal us in *this*." Her Guards are "our beautiful Guards." In the stress of the Crimean War "the Queen is ready to give her own yacht for a transport which could carry 1000 men. . . . The conduct of our *dear noble* Troops is *beyond praise*; it is quite heroic, and really I feel a pride to have *such Troops*." The army "has universally been victorious. Let us not be (as, alas,

we have often been) its detractors by our croaking." Her high spirit inspired an equal devotion. "I am amply repaid for everything!" replied the gallant young Sir Thomas Troubridge, sadly crippled by his wounds, when she told him she meant to make him one of her aides-de-camp. "Noble fellows!" she writes of her Crimean heroes, "I own I feel as if they were *my own children*; my heart beats for *them* as for my *nearest and dearest. . . . One must* revere and love such soldiers as those!"

She had a true English heart—a truer never beat; her first thought was always for her country. Even in her despair about Prince Albert's recovery she kept exclaiming: "The country! oh, the country! I could perhaps bear my own misery, but the poor country!" To class her as "alien-spirited" betrays ignorance, if not perverseness of judgment. And yet she had one un-English trait. Though "rich in saving common sense," she exhibited a curious effusiveness, which she may have inherited from her mother, a Princess of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. Her sense of humour partook of the Teutonic; when she was amused she was violently amused. At one of *Punch's* cartoons, says Lord Beauvale, "she split her sides with laughing."[8] To say she was German would be ridiculous; she looked on the Germans as an inferior nation: "Whatever may be the usual practice of Prussian Princes, it is not *every* day that one marries the eldest daughter of the Queen of England." And yet her sensibility or sentimentality were, as Mr Lytton Strachey says, such as might be natural to "the daughter of a German pastor." Scattered over her letters are German words—*Wehmuth, Sehnsucht, allerliebst, vertrauliches, gemüthlich*[9]—the flavour of which can only be fully appreciated by one who has lived in a middle-class German family. She was very sensitive to events of a melancholy nature; she recurred to her bereavements, seeming as loth to forget them as Tennyson was to forget his lost friend:

> "O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me,
> No casual mistress, but a wife?"

" And indeed one loves to *cling* to one's grief," she writes to King Leopold, on the death of her father-in-law. When the Prince's valet died : " I turn sick in writing it. . . . I burst into tears. All day long the tears would rush every moment to my eyes. . . . My nerves gave way ; poor Carl's death came before me in all its reality, and my tears flowed." Her transports of grief at her mother's death are therefore not surprising. She writes of a " *total want* of *power* of *real enjoyment* of *anything*. . . . Though the *blank* and the *loss to me*, in my isolated position especially, is *such* a *dreadful*, and such an *irreparable one*, the worst *trials* are *yet* to come." Alas, that was too true, and they were to come terribly soon.

The Prince's Germanism was a different matter ; he was German to the core. His external appearance—even his good looks—and his stiffness of manner, which so offended Englishmen, were German ; but these were only surface. His Germanism penetrated his ways of thinking, his political philosophy and all the impulses of his very being. This is not to say that he was untrue to the country of his adoption : on the contrary, England never had a more devoted servant. When his last illness was already upon him, with a hand scarcely strong enough to hold the pen, he wrote a Memorandum on a draft dispatch by Lord John Russell, which probably saved us from the calamity of a war with the United States. But there *was* a duality, and he expressed it himself at the time when his marriage was arranged : " While I shall be untiring in my efforts and labours for the country to which I shall in future belong, and where I am called to so high a position, I shall never cease *ein treuer Deutscher, Coburger, Gothauer zu sein.*" Germany, in fact, was ever his " spiritual " home. Evelyn Ashley, the biographer of Palmerston, was right in saying : " Although his opinions were conscientiously and entirely directed towards English objects, he had not entirely an English mind." But England came first and last with him. *The Times*, which had violently attacked him in the last year of his life, admitted at his death : " In him we have

had as true an Englishman as the most patriotic native of these Islands. He has had the sagacity to see and feel that the interests of his family and his dynasty had claims upon him superior to any other."

England's interests were paramount; but, for diagnosing our condition, and determining what would be for our material and mental and moral improvement, he always looked through German spectacles. These coloured his views on both our foreign and home politics, and especially on the British Constitution. He was an attached, even adoring, pupil of Baron Stockmar, who had rejoined the English Court at the Queen's accession.

In 1847 his intense desire for a United Germany took shape in a Memorandum to the King of Prussia; but in his ideas about Prussian policy there was nothing aggressive. He was not dreaming of a Germany with a Mailed Fist; the Union was to be accompanied by "popular forms of Government." A beginning might be made with a "permanent *Zollverein*," and Prussia should take the lead. The Prince had in his mind the domestic interests of the Vaterland, believing that if no steps were taken towards union "convulsions of all sorts" were to be feared. Palmerston, with whom he discussed these views, recognized the advantages of a close political alliance with Germany as a bulwark against France and Russia; but he could not swallow the *Zollverein* and its prohibitory duties, which would have been to the exclusion of English commerce; and he must have been rather surprised that this particular instrument of union should be advocated by such an ardent Free Trader. Stockmar, who also had German union very much at heart, but had his own ideas of how it ought to be achieved, strongly dissuaded the Prince from sending the Memorandum, and told him that he viewed the matter as a German Prince, in the "colours of German dynastic interests," and that these dynastic interests were the real impediment to union. On the part of these rulers of the small States he considered that "an act of self-reform" was needed. The next year was a terrible one for "dynastic

interests"; the Kings, said Carlyle, "were running about like a gang of coiners when the police had come amongst them." But after the Revolution dynastic ideas reasserted themselves, and the Prince was despondent about the Liberal movement in Germany. His Germanism, however, did not diminish, nor his hopes for a German Empire. "His only fault," said Aberdeen (1849), "was his excessive Germanism, and his being such a vehement and uncompromising partisan of the German Imperial Unity scheme, and abettor of the Prussian dangers." The Prince little thought that this unity was to be achieved by means of three wars, and by methods of Blood and Iron; his ideals and Bismarck's were poles asunder. But he was morbidly anxious that Prussia should have Schleswig. In 1850 Lord Melbourne,[10] an experienced diplomatist, tells Greville that "although the Court were quite powerless in such matters as the Greek or the Sicilian questions, they could do a great deal of mischief in Germany, for, being in constant communication with their relations and connexions there, they could exercise a good deal of indirect influence, and he thinks they have not scrupled to encourage the King of Prussia in his absurd conduct." Melbourne said that Palmerston "had acted a very proper and a very spirited part in reference to German affairs, having had to fight against the violent and inveterate prejudices of the Court, to which some of his colleagues were not disinclined to defer."

These "constant communications" with foreign relatives had always been a matter of suspicion to the Queen's subjects; and at last, in the beginning of 1854, a violent wave of hate broke upon the Prince. Its occasion was the resignation of Palmerston, which was really caused by his dislike of Russell's Reform plan, and was soon withdrawn; but the charge was made, and widely believed, that this resignation was really due "to an influence behind the Throne." The Prince was accused of sacrificing English to foreign and dynastic interests. One journal accused him of being the chief agent of "the Austro-Belgian-Coburg-

Orleans clique, the avowed enemies of England, and the subservient tools of Russian ambition." [11] It was alleged that the Prince's correspondence with foreign Courts ran counter to the policy of the Queen's responsible Ministers. Loud was the outcry, and the Prince (as was his wont in times of trouble) turned for comfort to Stockmar, his guide, philosopher and friend. The comfort was administered from Coburg in what Sir Theodore Martin describes as "a remarkable letter, in which the deepest student of our political history will find much to learn and profit by." Remarkable it certainly is, and of quite extraordinary interest to students of the English Constitution ; for it is to be remembered that the Prince to whom it was written (1) was now *de facto* King of England, and (2) accepted the whole of Stockmar's doctrine—"I heartily agree with every word you say." The letter therefore deserves a summary.

It may be premised that the views set out in this letter of 22nd January 1854 had already been impressed upon the Prince by Stockmar in the Free Trade crisis of December 1845. "The Sovereign," he had then propounded, "should not merely set the example of a pure and dignified life, but should be potential in Cabinet and Council through a breadth of view unwarped by the bias, and undistracted by the passions, of party." He had "never been able to discover that balance of the elements of their Constitution of which Englishmen boast so much." He had asserted "the right of the Crown to assert itself as head of the Council over the temporary leader of the Ministry." In the letter of January 1854 this thesis is elaborated. "Constitutional Monarchy has since 1830 been constantly in danger of becoming a pure Ministerial Government." The old Tories were extinct, "and the race, which in the present day bears their name, are simply degenerate bastards. Our Whigs, again, are nothing but partly conscious, partly unconscious Republicans, who stand in the same relation to the Throne as the wolf does to the lamb." If the Whigs have their way, "*the King, in the view of the Law, is nothing but a mandarin figure, which has to nod its head in assent, or shake it in denial,*

as his Minister pleases." (The italics are Stockmar's.) Therefore "*no opportunity should be let slip of vindicating the legitimate position of the Crown.*" For, he continues (perhaps too hopefully), "the most jealous and distrustful Liberalism, in any discussion about the definite interpretation of the law of Royal Prerogative, must be satisfied, if *this be placed no higher than a right on the part of the King to be the permanent President of his Ministerial Council.*" Now "the most stupid of Englishmen knows" that the Premier is only the chief of a party temporarily in power; and it ought to be clear to "the narrowest capacity" that the Premier must be tempted (1) to put party before country, and (2) to strengthen his majority by every means in his power. The theory that Ministers are responsible to the nation is mere "twaddle." The responsible Minister may do "the most stupid and mischievous things"; even if he be found out, his only punishment is removal from office. The Sovereign therefore has both the right and the duty to avert such dangers. Further, "the Sovereign may even take a part in the initiation and the maturing of Government measures." Stockmar admits that the judicious exercise of this right requires "a master mind," but claims that "it would not only be the best guarantee for Constitutional Monarchy, but would raise it to a height of power, stability and symmetry which has never been attained." He proceeds:

"Thus, then, do I vindicate for the Sovereign the position of a permanent Premier, who takes rank above the temporary head of the Cabinet, and in matters of discipline exercises supreme authority."

He then refers to the Reform Act, which (he says) transferred the centre of gravity in the Constitution from the Upper to the Lower House. Fortunately, about the same time, "a moral Sovereign" succeeded to the throne, to protect the Upper House from "the wild power of democracy." Henceforth the Lords (though they might not be aware of it), instead of having to support an unpopular Sovereign, were able to find support in a popular one; but

this would be given only "on the assumption that the part which they were entitled to take in legislation would be performed with intelligence, with sympathetic feeling suited to the spirit of the age (*zeitmässiger Humanität*), with industry and with courage." The conclusion of the matter was that "the Constitution can only be established and maintained by throwing a well-merited and deeply seated popularity on the part of the Sovereign into the scale against the weight and pressure of that democratical element which has become so powerful in the House of Commons," and that the foremost duty of the Minister is "manfully to defend the present well-deserved popularity of the Sovereign."

The courtly biographer of the Prince Consort maintained that no man understood the spirit of our Constitution better than Stockmar, and that his foreign origin was of positive advantage to his position as the Prince's confidential adviser. Surely it was most detrimental; for the Prince's unpopularity was almost entirely owing to the fact that not only was he a foreigner, but gave all his confidence to a foreigner. Stockmar was learned in the history of our Constitution, but he completely failed to understand our *practical* politics. His main proposal was that the Sovereign should be the permanent (and autocratic) President of the Cabinet, and, further, that he might even "take a part in the initiation and the maturing of Government measures." It is true that William the Third had so presided, and that Anne had assembled Cabinets on Sundays; but with George the First the practice had fallen into abeyance, for his ignorance of English would have prevented him from being of any assistance in Council. After nearly a century and a half Stockmar was urging this tremendous innovation, the revival of this most momentous function for the amplification of a *female* Sovereign—or perhaps for her deputy, a foreign Prince! Did he really imagine it would be tolerated by the Minister or by the country? He believed that the time was favourable because "a moral Sovereign" had come to the throne, and that there could be no difficulty in vindicating kingly

power "where such straightforward personages as the Queen and the Prince are concerned." The "master mind" was also, happily, available. But then not all kings are moral; Charles the Second, while presiding at Councils, relieved his boredom by playing with his lap-dogs. Nor do able kings and princes live for ever. The Prince Consort, with his "master mind," was cut off in his prime: could there be conceived a more melancholy situation than that of the widow Queen presiding at a Cabinet with Gladstone seated at her right and John Morley at her left—if indeed she would have permitted them to be seated? As for helping in the "initiation and maturing" of Government Bills, it was well said by the editors of Queen Victoria's *Letters* that Stockmar "never clearly understood that the Monarch should keep as far as possible clear of political details."

We note also Stockmar's hallucination that the resistless movement of democracy could be curbed by a Minister who had the support of a virtuous Queen, and his mistaken notion that Reform had transferred power from the Upper to the Lower House—the facts being that the House of Commons had long been the more powerful House ("Nobody cares a d——n for the House of Lords," said the Duke of Wellington in 1817), and that the real diminution of power was felt by the aristocratic or landed *class* (including, of course, individual Peers), and not by the House of Lords as such. We note his attack on party—a thing always obnoxious to autocrats and theorists since George the Third made his attack on "Connexion"; and we remember how Peel (as Mr Monypenny says) "shattered the Conservative Party, and not wholly, it would seem, in a spirit of inattention, but acting in some degree on a theory which he appears to have borrowed from the Court, that party was an evil, and that he could govern better without it"; and we may be inclined to think that Disraeli was wiser in holding that a great historical party was a necessary instrument of Government. We note that the Peers are warned to be on their best behaviour, and we cannot help also noting Stockmar's severe criticism of the

country where he had dwelt so long—where the Tories are "simply degenerate bastards," the doctrine of ministerial responsibility is "twaddle," and there may actually be things within the comprehension of "the most stupid of Englishmen."

Through his semi-official position Stockmar was in constant communication with all the leading men of the day. His political theories were therefore well known in English society; very likely they were often distorted or exaggerated. We cannot wonder if they caused some uneasiness, and some suspicion of the Court. "A foreign Baron," says Mr Lytton Strachey, "controlled a foreign Prince who controlled the Crown." The grievance was something like that felt a century before, when the heir to the Throne was being educated in the seclusion of Leicester House by a German Princess and a Scottish nobleman, and it was darkly hinted that the works of Bolingbroke were his text-books of history. If the Prince Consort had lived longer, said Disraeli, "he would have given us the blessings of absolute government"; but that was a government which Englishmen associated rather with curses. It can scarcely be denied that the Court was disposed to aggrandize power. Lord Clarendon, a strong Minister, but not wayward like Palmerston nor antagonistic to the Court, writes to Sir George Cornewall Lewis (26th December 1851): "The Queen and Prince are wrong in wishing that Courtiers, rather than Ministers, should conduct the affairs of the Country. . . . They labour under the curious mistake that the Foreign Office is their peculiar department, and that they have a right to control, if not to direct, the foreign policy of England." The Queen laid it down that, in a certain event —*i.e.* if the Foreign Secretary were to alter dispatches which she had sanctioned—she had "the Constitutional right" to dismiss him. This was in August 1850, and it is noteworthy that the language of her letter to Lord John Russell claiming this right is word for word the same as that of a Memorandum of Stockmar's drafted five months previously. Lord John does not appear to have demurred to this claim,

though it must have sorely offended his Whig conscience and the shades of his Whig ancestors.

Stockmar's attitude of patronage and superiority towards the House of Lords was reflected by the Court. There was a regrettable want of cordial feeling between the Court and the aristocracy. On the side of the great nobles there was no lack of correctness, nor of proper respect when the Royal visitors were entertained. "I mention merely a trifling instance to show *how* respectful they are" (writes the Queen ecstatically to King Leopold in January 1845)—"the Duke of Buckingham, who is immensely proud, bringing the cup of coffee after dinner to Albert himself. And everywhere my dearest Angel receives the respect and honours I receive."

But, as to the Queen, very early in her reign an opinion gained ground that she had ranged herself against aristocracy. She was then an out-and-out Whig, and it is true the Whigs were aristocrats; but they depended on the Radicals, and the Queen became identified also with the Radical cause. "Vote for M'Gruggy and our Young Queen!" is an election cry in one of Disraeli's novels. "Aristocracy and Church cannot contend against Queen and people united," writes Graham to Croker in 1839. In 1841 she tries to abrogate the Peers' right of audience. She suggested that written communications would be an adequate substitute; and replied to Graham, who had quoted Blackstone's *Commentaries* in support of the privilege: "The Queen knows that it has always been considered a sort of right of theirs to ask for and receive an audience." Tenacious of her own rights and prerogative, she showed an inclination to diminish the privileges of another order of the Constitution. In 1851 we find Stanley writing to Croker of "a Court jealous of the power of aristocracy," and another of Croker's correspondents, Sir George Sinclair, complaining that both Court and Whigs "are too intent on acquiring a spurious popularity by pandering to the persons of the multitude, and favouring the moneyed and *parvenu* interests at the expense of the

ancient proprietors of the soil." Such complaints may have been those of disobliged and "disgruntled" persons, but it is significant that they were rife.

The Prince rather ostentatiously avoided Society, as if it were

"Best quitted with disdain."

"Wherever he went, whether in a carriage or on horseback, he was accompanied by his equerry. He paid no visits in general society. His visits were to the studio of the artist, to museums of art and science, to institutions for good and benevolent purposes. Wherever a visit from him, or his presence, could tend to advance the real good of the people, there his horses might be seen waiting: never at the door of mere fashion." Nor was he more sympathetic to "mere" sport. He went deer-stalking and shooting, and one notable day greatly distinguished himself with the Belvoir Hunt. "Albert's riding so boldly and hard has made such a sensation that it has been written all over the country, and they make much more of it than if he had done some great act!" For some years he went hunting once a week, but his rule was to leave off at two o'clock, which is rather a curious rule for a fox-hunter. In 1861 he describes the Ascot Races as "made more tedious than usual by incessant rain." In one other respect he was unlike the great majority of aristocrats—and indeed of male human beings—he cared little for female society. He was "seldom much pleased with ladies or princesses." (As an exception, he was much attracted by the Empress Eugénie.) Bagehot observed of English society that "the Court is a separate part, which stands aloof from the rest of the London world, and which has but slender relations with the more amusing part of it." This was written some years after the Prince's death, but Bagehot maintained that this event made little difference. "Since then the Court has been always in a state of suspended animation, and for a time it was quite annihilated. But everything went on as usual. . . . The queen bee was taken away, but the hive went on."

It is a little difficult to understand why the Queen and the Prince became such favourers of Free Trade. Perhaps it was due to Stockmar, who was convinced that this policy was excellent—at any rate for our own country. Or it may have been from admiration of Peel. "The Court is very strong in favour of Free Trade," writes Greville, in January 1846, "and not less in favour of Peel." Or there may have been another subconscious reason. "Wild about Free Trade," writes Beauvale to Lady Palmerston, "and the whole Household talking nonsense in the same direction. With this there is a great wish to undervalue the aristocracy and (I doubt not) a great willingness to see them lowered." Beauvale, a Whig, was evidently as little fond of this measure as his brother Melbourne, who at Windsor denounced Peel's abandonment of Protection: "Ma'am, it is a damned dishonest act." The Queen laughed, but the courtiers were discomposed by the outburst. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was regarded by the old Tories as Free Trade propaganda. It was "a Temple of Free Trade" and hateful to Protectionists; its success only deepened their resentment.[12] The Prince himself asserted that the Tory mind correlated the two grievances. He complained to Stockmar (24th January 1854) of "the hostility and settled bitterness of the old High Tory Protectionist party against me on account of my friendship with the late Sir Robert Peel and of my success with the Exhibition."

Stockmar's King-President would have been a bureaucratic personage—the supreme head, in fact, of a hierarchy of bureaucrats. He would not have been content with shaping policy in its broader features; he would have required details to be submitted to him; he would have insisted on taking his part in the "initiation and maturing" of Government Bills. Foreign policy, naval and military organization, measures of social reform, Health Bills, Prison Bills, Education Bills, Legal Reform, Church Discipline—on every one of these matters he must be able to from and express a considered opinion, and give guidance to the Minister in charge. The Prince Consort would not

have shrunk from this enormous task of direction. No doubt he would have had the help of a Stockmar in the background: he would have been just such a ruler as Matthew Arnold admired—"a Sovereign with the advice of men like Wilhelm von Humboldt or Schleiermacher." There would have been an orgy of State intervention; in education, for instance, a centralizing scheme such as that for which Arnold so highly praised the Prussian von Humboldt.

To supreme direction the Prince was never admitted, but of such superintendence as came his way he made the most. It was his habit to "coach" diplomatists before they started for their legations. But in Home affairs he found greater outlets for his energy. In 1847 he was elected Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. Thackeray satirized "the Don Snobs, who are coming, cap in hand, to a young Prince of six and twenty, and to implore him to be the chief of their renowned University"; and *Punch* published a bitter cartoon (vol. xii., p. 109) of the Dons "Bowing to Prince Albert's Hat." Whewell, the Master of Trinity, who was somewhat profuse in his compliments to the Prince, had already been attacked by *Punch* for not allowing undergraduates to sit down in his presence (vol. ix., p. 35). But whatever motives prompted his election, the Cambridge authorities found they had a Chancellor who took his position seriously. The Vice-Chancellor was soon required to furnish "a comprehensive table, showing the scheme of tuition in the Colleges separately and the University, for the ensuing year. I mean the subjects to be taught in the different Colleges, the authors to be read there, the subjects for examination, those selected for competitions and prizes, and the lectures to be given by the different professors in their different branches." The Prince recognized that these returns "might entail some trouble," but they were duly prepared, and were very carefully studied by the Prince, who observes *inter alia* (in a letter to Lord John Russell), that the new Professor of Oriental Languages lectures this year upon Sanskrit, "but he has

got only *one* pupil." Later he put forward a scheme of studies, which in spite of opposition was finally carried by "a triumphant majority."

He took a deep interest in the army. Observing, during the Crimean War, how meagre were the reports drawn up by Lord Raglan, he sent to the Duke of Newcastle "a complete scheme of tabulated Returns drawn up by himself." This model was adopted, and proved of the greatest service. "The wonder is" (wrote Sir Theodore Martin) "that a reform of this nature should have been left to emanate from one who had no practical experience in war." He also (1861) advocated the organization of Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteers as an integral part of the army, a reform which was not consummated for another fifty years. In 1855 he drew up a plan for the removal of Westminster School into the country, and for pulling down all the old buildings that surrounded it, thereby opening up the view of the Abbey. He had a project for a reformed public-house, based on the very sensible principle that it should be a place of entertainment for a man's wife and family. For Wellington College he drafted elaborate regulations with reference to the Queen's Medal for good conduct—one of which does not quite fit in with our English notions, for he proposed that after the headmaster had announced the winner's name to the prefects, a week was to elapse during which "any prefect who is acquainted with any act, or course of conduct upon the part of the boy selected, which he considers would disqualify him for such a distinction," should communicate with the headmaster. He urged on the Council of Military Education a system of marks for good conduct at Sandhurst. This proposal met with considerable opposition; but the Prince finally had his way, with the qualification that the cadet should not accumulate marks, but should start credited with a maximum, and be disqualified if this maximum were reduced through misconduct by more than two-thirds. One more instance may be added of the wide range of the Prince's interests: in 1845 (*Æt.* 26) he writes to Wilberforce

very fully his " views upon the position of a Bishop in the House of Lords."

He had a passion for writing Memoranda—to the King of Prussia on German unity, to Lord John Russell on foreign affairs, to Lord Aberdeen on the Eastern Question, to the Duke of Somerset on the state of the navy, innumerable Memoranda on his interviews with Ministers—the *Letters of Queen Victoria* are studded with them. Two days after a conversation with Sir Robert Peel he showed that statesman a Memorandum which " filled six sheets, and contained, as minutely as I could render it, the whole of the arguments we had gone through." Sir Robert was " visibly uneasy," for he had talked without reserve. Much to his relief this Memorandum was burned, but another was composed to chronicle the incident. Happy must that day have been on which the Prince received from his own daughter at Berlin her own first Memorandum ! The subject she chose was *The advantage of a law of Ministerial responsibility.* " It would have delighted your heart to read it," wrote the proud father to Stockmar.

But not only was he ready to give instruction in foreign politics, diplomacy, naval and military matters, the methods of higher education and the duties of bishops ; he had a thousand minor accomplishments. Never was a more Admirable Crichton. He excelled in fencing, had a considerable gift for musical composition, was a clever mimic, showed great technical skill in painting, had a love of natural history and a genius for landscape gardening, and was versed in English and German jurisprudence. He knew much about fossils, took a lively interest in the breeding of stock and the improvement of agricultural implements, surprised an Edinburgh professor by his knowledge of ornithology, showed a technical knowledge of hydraulic engineering, could point out defects in wool-combing machines, designed a mangle for laundering, knew more about glass than a certain eminent manufacturer thereof, and (to speak generally) " often surprised people by his intimate knowledge of the technicalities of their

own craft." He was also a practical agriculturist, and understood architecture in all its styles; at Osborne he devised a system for the utilization of sewage; he introduced an abridged Liturgy for use in the Royal Chapels, and was an expert in all kinds of fire-arms.

It is impossible not to smile at this unending list of accomplishments. Irreverent Mr Punch indulged in a loud laugh. He has a cartoon "Prince Albert at Home, where he will sustain (no end of) different Characters" (1847, vol. xii., p. 119). There are twenty Prince Alberts in the picture, and each one of them is dressed for a different part:

"Field-Marshal am I, Merchant-Tailor, and Hatter,
The Army I've fitted quite to a T;
Cambridge—of course 'twas from no wish to flatter—
Makes me her Chancellor—not a small matter."

Or he is shown in his studio, designing helmets for the army:

"His prices, he trusts, none will fancy too dear,
By contract he takes 30,000 a year!"

Or at the piano singing *Vaterland*, while in the foreground the Queen is dealing severely with Lord John Russell. *Punch* also made merry over the Great Exhibition —until it proved a success, when, "like a good man of business,"[13] he issued a commemorative "Extra." The Prince preserved one of these cartoons, "The Industrious Boy" (1850, vol. xviii., p. 229), in which he appears cap in hand, collecting money for his darling project. He could enjoy a joke against himself.

John Bull is always suspicious of versatility, and especially when it is advertised, as must necessarily happen in the case of a Prince. No human being could really achieve such a multifarious excellence; but the Prince's accomplishments and activities proved at least his enormous industry. From a sense of duty he continued at his tasks after illness had overtaken him. He worked himself to death.

In the light of the political history of this period—

in which the upper classes had lost their exclusive domination, the middle classes had been admitted to power, and middle-class politicians were already promising the suffrage to all householders—the career of the Prince is of peculiar interest. For twenty years he lived and laboured in England. His power—a power exercised largely behind the scenes, and stigmatized as "the Hidden Hand"—grew to great proportions. Regarded at first as a nonentity, he soon showed his ability in his negotiations with Peel over the Bedchamber question. Palmerston, who began by treating him as negligible, said in 1855: "Till my present position [*i.e.* as Prime Minister] gave me so many opportunities of seeing his Royal Highness, I had no idea of his possessing such eminent qualities as he has." Napoleon III. spoke of him as "*une des intelligences les plus supérieures de l'époque.*" Russell, a year before the Prince's death, was begging him for "some clue to our foreign policy" as regards Germany, and adopting the advice he received. Disraeli early learned to admire him: "He has great abilities and wonderful knowledge—I think the best-educated man I ever met" (1852); and at his death: "We have buried our Sovereign. The German Prince has governed England for twenty-one years with a wisdom and energy such as none of our Kings has ever shown." Certainly the country lost a very able ruler, who had lived a very worthy life. But did he leave behind him an enduring impression?

There have been two German invasions of England. George the First came in 1714 with his mistresses, Schulemburg the "Maypole" and Kilmansegg the "Elephant," with Bernstorff, Robethon, and other rapacious favourites. Schulemburg once told a hostile crowd, "Ve kom here vor your goots," and a voice replied, "Aye, damn ye, and for our chattels too." In the second invasion, Prince Albert and Stockmar came for our "goots" in another sense; they came with a sincere desire to *do us good*, morally and intellectually. But in neither case did we assimilate the invaders. There was an unbridgeable gulf between the Prince and the Queen's subjects. The Prince himself

recognized the difference: "In Germany the idea of the State in the abstract is a thing divine: here it means the freedom of the individual citizen. The worth of a State is appraised here according to the measure of individual freedom which it secures to its subjects, and in that men find its highest object." England was no soil for Stockmarism; when the Prince died, Stockmarism died here with him; and Stockmar himself soon followed him to the grave.

Mr Lytton Strachey, following Disraeli, imagines that the Prince, if he had lived to old age, might have reached a position of absolute power. This could never have been; the country would have found an occasion to revolt from his system—acting on some more tangible ground than the vague suspicions of the Court in 1854. For England is England, and Germany is Germany:

"And never the twain shall meet."

Upon aristocracy, from 1840-1861, there blew from the Court an east wind. The Prince instinctively disliked those independent magnates whose estates were small principalities. To him the State was "a thing divine"; to them a thing whose interference was detestable. They managed their properties, as a rule ably, and wanted no Board of Agriculture. Very many maintained their own schools, and objected to inspectors from Whitehall. Just as the dynastic interests of the Princes were an obstacle to German unity, so the individualism of the great English proprietors was felt by Prince Albert to be inimical to all bureaucratic schemes of reform. It has even been thought that the Prince was *apprehensive* of aristocracy—that he feared lest the magnates might threaten the Throne. That he entertained such ideas is conceivable, for we know that his tutor Stockmar suspected the Whigs of republicanism. But such fears, if they existed, were ludicrous. The Dukes only wanted to "live and let live." The Duke of Omnium "was very willing that the Queen should be queen, so long as he was allowed to be Duke of Omnium." If any great man

could have become Dictator of England, it was the Duke of Wellington, and there never was a more loyal and dutiful subject. Moreover, the political power of "Dukism" had been undermined eight years before the Prince's arrival.

The great lords were perfectly loyal to the Queen, and perfectly respectful to the Prince. The Prince, like Matthew Arnold (with whose ideas his had much in common), regarded them as "Barbarians." He avoided the haunts of "mere fashion." He would have been puzzled by the paradoxes of a St Aldegonde; having no sense of humour, he would have taken them *au grand sérieux*. He preferred the middle classes—the clever enterprising manufacturers, whom he could astonish by his expert knowledge, and the scientists who came in bus-loads to Balmoral. Queen Victoria was not so appreciative of these "worthy" folk. Men of wit and fashion were not attracted by the Court. It was, in fact, a decorously dull Court, as dull as George the Third's. That of Charles the Second was doubtless very wicked, but it was a brilliant scene of life and intelligence. Granville mentions theatricals at Windsor—"moderate, but much enjoyed by the Royal circle." Gladstone plays commerce there: "I found I had won 2s. 2d. at the end, 8d. of which was paid me by the Prince." Such diversions did not tempt gay and frivolous nobles to Windsor or Osborne. Aristocracy had no designs against Monarchy, nor could want of Royal favour do aristocracy harm. The danger to aristocracy came not from above them, but below. In reality, there was a bond of interest between the Throne and the Peerage; for both depended on the hereditary principle. The Queen in due time recognized this. As George Smythe predicted, she ended "as a Tory and something more."

If the Prince imagined that some system could be set up in substitution for Party he made a grievous mistake. Royal personages have always been apt to nourish this illusion, for parties are bulwarks against Royal power. George the Third hated parties, except his own peculiar

Party—that of "The King's Friends." The Duke of Clarence said (1828): "The names Whig and Tory meant something a hundred years ago, but are mere nonsense nowadays." But both Whig and Tory thought otherwise. "The extinction of party connexion," wrote Earl Russell, means "the dissolution of honourable friendships, the pursuit of selfish ends, the want of concert in council," and other evils, including "the caprices of an intriguing Court." "Party," said Croker, "is in England a stronger passion than love, avarice, or ambition." Disraeli defined it as "the best guarantee for public and private honour."

We have one national failing which the Prince might have amended if he had lived longer. In the Crimean War he struggled against our tradition of "muddling through." Towards the close of it he told Granville that the English statesman's principal deficiency was a want of philosophical training. "They never look at any subject as part of a whole." He instanced the administration of the army and the navy. Nobody ever asked themselves the question, "Why we wanted an army?" and then, "What that army should be." This was only too true.

The Prince's aloofness from society was of no detriment to aristocracy: the aristocrats were too securely entrenched. Again, they were British and he was foreign. Though he paid attentions to eminent members of the middle classes, with the middle classes as a whole he was also unpopular; they enthusiastically supported Palmerston against him. Their organ, *Punch*, incessantly lampooned him. The insularity of the middle classes was sure to be arrayed against any person with European views. As to the "Lower Classes," the Prince was most benevolently disposed towards them; but he was no democrat, nor during his lifetime was any responsible statesman bold enough to trust democracy. Finally, then, we may ask, Did his strenuous life affect for good or ill the monarchical power? The Queen wrote to King Leopold in 1858: "For *what* has not my beloved and perfect Albert done? Raised monarchy to the *highest* pinnacle of *respect*, and rendered it *popular* beyond what it ever was in this

country ! " If we make every allowance for wifely adoration it may yet surely be claimed that the Prince set up, and helped the Queen to set up, a standard of duty for the Royal Family that has never since been lowered. It is interesting to speculate what effect a prolongation of his life would have had upon the character of King Edward the Seventh. Would the Prince have constrained his son

" To shun delights and live laborious days,"

initiating him into statecraft, and putting responsibility on his shoulders ? Or would there have been a clash of two such differing temperaments, ending, after the manner of the Georges, in quarrels and estrangement ? The Prince of Wales endured much ; his education must have been a terrible ordeal. But he always held his father, and the memory of his father, in affection ; and it is impossible that such an example could have failed to impress itself on his character. Indeed, we have only to reflect what would have happened if the Queen had married a worthless or dissolute husband in order to realize what the Throne owes to the Prince. After the selfishness and sensuality of George and the eccentricity of William, a vicious Prince Consort, or even an idle or an extravagant or a conjugally unfaithful Prince Consort, might have shaken it to its foundations.[14]

Usually, when a man of high place and office dies, his widow is at least able to free herself from the public responsibilities she has shared with him. With the Queen the position was reversed ; her bereavement added infinitely to her load of cares. " The loss of her husband," wrote Lady Theresa Lewis to her brother Lord Clarendon, " has changed her from a powerful sovereign (which she was with the knowledge and judgment of her husband to guide her opinions and strengthen her will) into a weak and desolate woman with the weight of duties she has not the moral or physical power to support." No wonder if she bent, and almost broke, beneath the blow. Clarendon himself had feared for her reason in the event of the Prince's death.[15]

Her very photographs indicate a change from a comely and happy young matron to a gloomy woman of middle age,

"A beauty-waning and distressèd widow."

She secluded herself, and her popularity, which had been so much remarked in 1858 at the marriage of the Princess Royal, now disappeared. In September 1865 *Punch* had a notable cartoon in which Paulina (as Britannia) unveils the statue and addresses Hermione (the Queen): "'Tis time! descend; be stone no more!" Public opinion demanded that she should reappear, and renew the pomp and splendour of a Court. But State business seemed to overwhelm her. In the Schleswig-Holstein crisis of 1864 she wrote to Granville: "The Queen suffers much, and her nerves are more and more totally shattered, and her rest broken. . . . Oh, how fearful it is to be suspected—uncheered—unguided and unadvised—and how alone the poor Queen feels! . . . The Queen is completely exhausted by the anxiety and suspense, and misses her beloved husband's help, advice, support, and love in an overwhelming manner." As for a public appearance, it would be "the spectacle of a poor, broken-hearted widow, nervous and shrinking, dragged in *deep mourning*, ALONE in STATE as a *show*" (to King Leopold, 3rd August 1865).

She was, nevertheless, with desperate perseverance, trying to continue Prince Albert's Germanizing policy, against an anti-German England and an anti-German Palmerston. "The Queen is up in her stirrups," wrote Granville to Clarendon (3rd August 1863), "very German. I was obliged to hint that it was a question on which she could not hope to be omnipotent." She was alarmed also, wrote Disraeli (5th November 1863) to Mrs Brydges Willyams, for the future throne of her daughter, the Princess Royal of Prussia, which she thought was threatened by the intrigues of the Emperor Napoleon. To the Princess she writes (27th January 1864): "My heart and sympathies are all German," and to Granville, on the same day: "We are, alas! detested in Germany," although that country was "our natural

ally." The Prince of Wales, who had recently married a Danish Princess, sympathized with Denmark. In July of the same year Gladstone enters in his Diary: "The Prince of Wales rode with Granville and me; he showed a little Danism." The Prince told Clarendon that the Princess "passed sleepless nights and was miserable" on account of her parents' troubles. But our statesmen failed to make good their high-sounding words, and Denmark was left to her fate. The claims of the Duke of Augustenburg were roughly rejected; Prussia and Austria claimed the Duchies by right of conquest. Now at last the Queen saw Prussian policy in its true light:

"Her Majesty thinks that it is quite right that we should not now mix ourselves up in the question, and that Prussia should at least be made aware of what she and her Government, and every honest man in Europe, must think of the gross and unblushing violation of every assurance and pledge that she had given, which Prussia has been guilty of." [16]

Her Germanism was mitigated,[17] but the grievance of her retirement rankled more and more, until in 1871 it found a seemingly concerted expression in the Press.[18] But in all this there was nothing very serious. At any moment, if she could have nerved herself to take part in popular functions, it was in her power to regain all her popularity. Her position was really firm and assured. Bagehot wrote in 1867: "No one proposes to remove Queen Victoria; if anyone is in a safe place on earth, she is in a safe place. In these very pages it has been shown that the mass of our people would obey no one else, that the reverence she excites is the potential energy—as science now speaks—out of which all minor forces are made, and from which lesser functions take their efficiency." Her subjects believe, Bagehot says, that "they have a mystic right to obey her." This "mystery" was beginning to be the strength of Victoria, much exceeding the strength of the Prince Consort, though statesmen had come to consult him on European politics. She was beginning to be regarded as a sacred institution. But Bagehot was not an optimist about the continuance

of this prestige. "It is only during the period of the present reign that in England the duties of a constitutional sovereign have ever been well performed. . . . As far as experience goes, there is no reason to expect an hereditary series of useful limited monarchs." Even if the Prince come young to the throne, the chances are against his living the strenuous life ; " but the case is worse when he comes to it old or middle-aged. He is then unfit to work. He will then have spent the whole of youth and the first part of manhood in idleness, and it is unnatural to expect him to labour. A pleasure-loving lounger in middle life will not begin to work as George III. worked, or as Prince Albert worked." It is impossible to miss the application of these words, but the implied prediction was falsified. There are few things in history more remarkable than the kingly career of Edward the Seventh, who succeeded at the age of sixty, having lived what seemed to many a "pleasure-loving" life; it was forgotten how conscientiously on the Queen's behalf he had for years performed the most tedious ceremonies, nor was it known that he had been debarred by the Queen herself from State business—a long exclusion that would have been fatal to most characters. Already three generations that have followed the Queen have maintained her tradition of devoted service, and made the foundations of the Throne firmer than they have ever been before in English history. But the security of the Throne will continue to depend upon the character of the Monarch.

A cross-current of growing force met the revolutionary stream which, in 1832, seemed about to sweep away Church and State. No one living then would have believed in such a rehabilitation of the Throne. Nor would any man in 1867 have imagined that thirty years later the Monarch would be the recipient of a still more intense and almost religious homage, as not merely Queen of England, but Empress of India, and supreme Head of the British Empire.

NOTES

[1] About the same time the "Adelaide" line of omnibuses was rechristened by another name.

[2] We read of this officer, in *The Letters of Queen Victoria* (vol. i., p. 108), petitioning the Queen, in 1838, that he and the other aides-de-camp might wear sashes. Melbourne advises: "This was always refused by the late King as being absurd and ridiculous—as it is, particularly considering Lord Amelius's figure—and your Majesty had perhaps better say that you can make no change."

[3] Dr Gann, the explorer, found that the Indians of Central America believed that Queen Victoria had "spoken with God."

[4] "An alien-spirited old lady, making much of the pathos of her widowhood, and trading still on the gallantry and generosity that had welcomed her as a 'girl-queen' . . . Victoria, that poor little old panting German widow" (Mr H. G. Wells).

[5] *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vol. i., p. 52.

[6] *Queen Victoria* (Lytton Strachey), p. 22.

[7] When the new Liberal Ministers went to Osborne in 1892 the Queen said to Sir William Harcourt: "How do you do, Sir William? I hope you are very well." Harcourt replied in the affirmative, and added: "I hope, Madam, you will feel that our desire is to make matters as easy and as little troublesome to you as we can possibly do." She bowed, but said nothing, and then asked: "How is Lady Harcourt? Terrible weather, is it not? and so oppressive."

[8] The cartoon may be found in *Punch* (1846), vol. x., p. 6. The Queen is telling Lord John Russell, who is attired as a page-boy: "I'm afraid you're not strong enough for the place, John."

[9] This *Schwärmerei* was reflected back by one who became deeply attached to her. "The beloved Queen TOO SWEET," "The Beloved," "Our blessed One" (*Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley*, passim).

[10] Better known as Lord Beauvale. He had recently succeeded to the peerage of his brother, the Prime Minister.

[11] *Life of the Prince Consort* (Sir Theodore Martin), vol. ii., p. 538.

[12] Carlyle condemned it as an insincerity. "Crystal Palace—bless the mark!—is fast getting ready, and bearded figures already grow frequent on the streets; 'all nations' crowding to us with their so-called industry or ostentatious frothery" (*Journal*, 21st April 1851). The Duke of Wellington always wrote of it as The Glass Palace; he took a leading part in organizing the Exhibition, and visited it daily.

[13] Spielmann's *History of Punch*, p. 51.

[14] The Prince was, to an unusual degree, exempt from ordinary human sins and weaknesses. Even his foibles were not so much a matter of character, as of his foreign origin. It is not surprising that the Queen's love for him amounted to "idolatry"—to use Lady

Augusta Stanley's expression. It was this very Grandisonian perfection that was apt to be a little wearisome to the countrymen of his adoption, just as Tennyson's King Arthur annoyed Swinburne. But the Prince's virtues cannot be denied. " I never saw such tenderness," wrote Lady Augusta Stanley, " such gentleness, such tact as his—Oh ! he is one in millions " (*Letters of Lady Augustus Stanley*, p. 200). " Unselfish, patient, kind-hearted, truthful and just," was the verdict of Lady Ponsonby. But as to his intellect : " He was in ability on a level with a very intellectual German on the second line " (*Mary Ponsonby*, by Magdalen Ponsonby, p. 3). Both these ladies, from their positions at Court, had exceptional opportunities of judging. Lady Ponsonby's is an excellent summary of the Prince's character, appreciative but critical.

[15] Writing to Derby (17th February 1862) she describes Windsor as " a living grave." And two years after her bereavement, to the King of the Belgians: " I must bear it till the Lord pleases to take me. . . I hope I am *gradually* nearing the end of my sad and wearisome journey."

[16] The Prince too, not long before he died, had become disillusioned: " Prussia sets up a claim to stand at the head of Germany, but she is not German in her conduct. . . . She leads Germany, not upon the path of liberty and constitutional development, which Germany (Prussia included) requires and desires. I can imagine that, with the high military pretensions to which she has laid claim for the last forty-five years, she suffers under an oppressive consciousness that her army is the only one which during this long period has not been called into action " (Letter to a friend at Berlin, 9th May 1861).

[17] " Prussia seems inclined to behave as atrociously as possible, and as *she always has done* ! Odious people the Prussians are, *that* I *must* say " (to King Leopold, 3rd August 1865). " The infamy of the conduct of the Prussians " (27th August 1865).

[18] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii., p. 426.

VII

THE RAILROAD

The Phenomenon of Speed—Creevey & Greville on Railway Travelling—Early Hostility—Mrs Gamp & Miss Porter—Palmerston on its Convenience—Travellers' Fears—Tunnels—Belief that it was not permanent—Losses of Innkeepers, Postboys, etc.—Rejoicings at First Opening—Surtees on its Advantages—Queen Victoria on its Benefit to Christianity—Matthew Arnold & Bagehot—The First Period, 1830-1841—The Third-Class Passenger—Troops—Judges—The Boom—Hudson—A Democratic Influence—Coincidence with Reform

ANY elderly man of the present day will remember that in the days of his childhood elderly folk were very fond of impressing upon him how lucky he was to be born in an age of such material improvements, and that of all his blessings they seemed to regard the change from stage-coach to railway as the greatest. They were never tired of pointing out how much more time they had had to spend in travelling when *they* were young, how slowly the coaches progressed, and how very cold it could be on the outside seats—where, indeed, cases were known of passengers being frozen to death. The opening of the railways was the event that divided the Early Victorian's experiences; for him there were two sharply contrasted eras—the pre-Railway and the Railway—and to him the railroad was a more outstanding phenomenon than the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Revolution or the Reform Bill.

No doubt this Early Victorian's fathers and grandfathers had expatiated to him as a boy in a similar strain, of how amazingly travel had been expedited since their own early days. Surtees in one of his stories mentions a notice that used to hang in the coffee-room of the " Black Swan " at

York, which stated that a four-days stage-coach would begin to run to London on Friday the 12th of April 1706. This may well have excited the merriment of those who, a century later, completed the coach journey in less than twenty-four hours. But, apart from the increased speed of the railway (which was a matter of degree), all the conditions of travel were altered for the better: there was comfort, and certainty, and protection from the weather, and accommodation for scores of persons in a train instead of the dozen which made up a coach-load. But there was also a thing of serious import to a great many—the disappearance of long-distance horse-traffic from the highways. In the social sphere—the sphere of manners—all this was a tremendous revolution.

Not but what the increase in speed was of itself a portent, even as compared with the perfection and punctuality which had been already attained by the stage-coaches. As to the latter, Creevey records (1824) that he travelled from London to Doncaster, a distance of 160 miles, in 20½ hours, including stoppages for meals. In 1834 the Edinburgh Mail completed the journey of 400 miles in little more than 40 hours; taking stoppages into account, the rate was 11 miles an hour, and "we may set our watches by it any point of her journey." The journey now takes 8¼ hours. In September 1832 Gladstone was hastily summoned from Torquay to stand as the Tory candidate at Newark—and had to travel on a Sunday, which greatly perturbed his conscience. He left Torquay at 8.45 A.M. and drove to Newton Abbot; thence took a chaise to Exeter, where he stopped nearly an hour; at Exeter he took the coach to London, arriving at Piccadilly at 6.30 A.M. on Monday—18½ hours from Exeter. He then went to Fetter Lane, washed and breakfasted, and left at 8 A.M. by the High Flyer for Newark, where he arrived at midnight—Newark being 120 miles from London. "Such in forty hours," observes his biographer, "was the first of Mr Gladstone's countless political pilgrimages," and not (we should think) the least fatiguing of them. In 1841 the father of Mr Cecil

Torr travelled from Piccadilly to Exeter (170 miles) in 18 hours; in 1842 he made the same journey by rail in 9 hours 20 minutes.[1] It is now done without a stop in 3 hours 18 minutes. As to the pace achieved by the steam-engine in those early days, Stephenson told Lord Lichfield in 1834 that he had kept up a mile a minute for several miles on the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, but Stephenson was a privileged speed-fiend. In 1837 Greville records, "one engineer went at the rate of 45 miles an hour, but the Company turned him off for doing so." In 1838 Disraeli travelled from London to Maidenhead at the rate of 36 miles an hour, his train being drawn "by a new engine called the Northern Star, of enormous and unprecedented power." In 1837 Dr Arnold notes with surprise that he had travelled from Manchester to Birmingham (95 miles) in 5 hours.

To be carried at the rate of 36 miles an hour, three times as fast as a post-chaise, must have been an extraordinary experience, but a far less speed was too much for Creevey:

"I had the satisfaction (November 1829), for I can't call it *pleasure*, of taking a trip of five miles in it, which we did in just a quarter of an hour—that is, 20 miles an hour. As accuracy upon this subject was my great object, I held my watch in my hand at starting, and all the time; and as it has a second hand, I knew I could not be deceived; and so it turned out that there was not the difference of a second between the coachee or conductor and myself. But observe, during these five miles, the machine was occasionally made to put itself out or *go it*; and then we went at the rate of 23 miles an hour, and just with the same ease as to motion or absence of friction as the other reduced pace. But the quickest motion is to me *frightful*: it is really flying, and it is impossible to divest yourself of the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident happening. It gave me a headache that has not left me. Sefton is convinced that some damnable thing must come of it; but he and I seem more struck with such apprehension than others."

The year in which Creevey took this trip with the house-

party at Knowsley was the first year in which omnibuses were known as such, and these pleased him better. He writes in 1833: "I have for the first time boarded an omnibus, and it is charming. I just long to go back to one in Piccadilly." Greville's first record of a railway journey was in July 1837, and his report is far more favourable than Creevey's:

"Nothing can be more comfortable than the vehicle in which I was put, a sort of chariot with two places, and there is nothing disagreeable about it but the occasional whiffs of stinking air which it is impossible to exclude altogether. The first sensation is a slight degree of nervousness and a feeling of being run away with, but a sense of security soon supervenes, and the velocity is delightful. . . . The train was very long, and heads were continually popping out of the several carriages, attracted by well-known voices, and then came the greetings and exclamations of surprise, the 'Where are you going?' and 'How on earth came you here?' . . . It certainly renders all other travelling irksome and tedious by comparison."

It is rather curious to notice how long some eminent persons waited before they ventured on a journey, persons to whom railway travelling would have meant a great saving of time. In February 1842 *The Morning Post* announced that the Queen never travelled by railway. Prince Albert used it when travelling alone from Windsor to London, and had been heard to observe at the end of a journey: "Not quite so fast next time, Mr Conductor, if you please." [2] As a matter of fact, the Queen's first journey on the Great Western Railway took place on 13th June 1842. "We arrived here yesterday morning," she writes to King Leopold from Buckingham Palace, "having come by the railroad, from Windsor, in half-an-hour, free from dust and crowd and heat, and I am quite charmed with it." The Duke of Wellington's first trip was in August 1843, from London to Southampton [3]: to the end of his days he preferred travelling to and from Strathfieldsaye by road.

It is also worth recalling how strong was the hostility

shown by powerful magnates to railway projects. In 1825 Creevey sat on a Committee to deal with the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Bill. "Every landed gentleman of the county" was against it. On 25th March: "I get daily more interested about this railroad—on its own grounds to begin with, and the infernal, impudent, lying jobbing by its promoters." On 31st May: "This railway is the devil's own—from 12 till 4 daily is really too much." At last, on 1st June: "Well—this devil of a railway is strangled at last. . . . Sefton's ecstasies are *beyond*, and he is pleased to say it has been all my doing; so it's all mighty well." Creevey's editor says that he "acted openly in the interests of his friends Lords Derby and Sefton, who, like most territorial magnates at that time, viewed the designs of railway engineers with the utmost apprehension and abhorrence." The Earl of Darlington successfully opposed the first Stockton and Darlington Railway Bill because it threatened to affect his favourite covert. Lord Eldon's last speech was against the construction of the Great Western. An article in *The Quarterly Review* of 1825 was contemptuous of the new invention:

"As to those persons who speculate on making railways general throughout the United Kingdom, and superseding all the canals, all the wagons, mail and stage coaches, post-chaises, and, in short, every other mode of conveyance by land and water, we deem them, and their visionary schemes, unworthy of notice."[4] By prejudiced persons every kind of mishap was attributed to the railways. "Them Confugion steamers" and especially "them screeching railroad ones" were accused by Mrs Gamp of "bringing ewents on at times nobody counted on 'em. . . . I have heerd of one young man, a guard upon a railway, only three years opened—well does Mrs Harris know him, which indeed he is her own relation by her sister's marriage with a master sawyer—as is godfather at this present time to six-and-twenty blessed little strangers, equally unexpected, and all on 'um named after the Ingeins as was the cause." A less fanciful cause of complaint was the spoiling of scenery.

Miss Jane Porter, a novelist, wrote to Lord Clarendon (1839) against a projected line through the Kenilworth country :

" Our Henrys—our Edwards, with their royal trains, their princely huntings and their knightly jousts—our queenly Elizabeth with her court of heroes, gallant and poetical—her maidens, fair as her virgin self ; and Shakespeare in the van and our Walter Scott in the rear—all, all call out against the dire and wicked desolation." On this question of scenery Croker showed an unexpected freedom from bias. He wrote to an inhabitant of Hornsey, who had been bewailing the desecration of the countryside : " A railroad runs through the beautiful valley of the Derwent, and I think that triumph of art sets off, as well as renders more accessible, the natural beauties of the scene." Nevertheless it is difficult to understand how signal-boxes and cuttings and embankments can enhance the charm of scenery, and it is intelligible that landowners were anxious to keep such objects a decent distance from their mansions. Some, however, lived to realize that a railway station within a short distance had its advantages. Palmerston put the case (1864) in one of his jolly chaffing speeches, which shows how the point of view was changing, and indicates that the frequenter of country-houses was now beginning to object to a very long drive from the station to his host's mansion :

" In former times a gentleman asked his friend in London to come down to him in the country, and the friend came with things to last him a fortnight or three weeks, and he took, perhaps, a week on the journey. Now if a friend meets another in St James's Street and says : ' I shall have some good shooting next week ; will you come down to me and spend a few days ? ' The friend says : ' Oh, by all means ! I shall be charmed. What is the nearest station to your house ? ' ' Well,' the friend says, ' I am not very well off at present with regard to railway communication : the nearest station is sixteen miles from my house ; but it is a good road : you will get a nice fly, and you will come very

well.' Upon which the invited guest says: 'Did you say it was Tuesday you asked me for?' 'Yes,' says the countryman; 'and I think you told me you were free on that day.' Upon which the other replies: 'I have a very bad memory. Upon my word, I am very sorry, but I have a particular engagement on that day' (*Laughter*). Then he offers himself as a visitor to some other friend, who has a station within one or two miles of his house" (*Cheers and Laughter*).

Needless to say, some of the early travellers were full of apprehensions, and (like Creevey) were haunted by "the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident happening." One, who in 1842 had braved the journey from London to Brighton, wrote to a relation who had further tempted fate by returning by rail to town:

"I was very glad to find from your note that you reached home safely, having escaped all the dangers of the railroad with its awful tunnels. I think of returning by the good old stage-coach, slow though it be: it is better to lose time than to run the risk of being crushed to pieces in those dark tunnels, where you have not a chance of saving yourself by jumping out."

As to choice of seat, this gentleman went on the principle *medio tutissimus ibis*: "For I see the hinder carriages are liable to be run into, therefore the danger is about equal to that of the front, except the bursting of the engine."[5] The tunnels were particularly terrifying. "And then those terrible grottoes," says Theodora in *Lothair*; "it is quite a descent of Proserpine." (Could any English author but Disraeli have described a tunnel as a "grotto," or, a steam-engine as a "loosened megatherium"—or, for the matter of that, a primrose as "an ambassador of spring," or a prawn as "the rosy-coloured tribute of Torbay"?) Theodora adds another horror of railway travel, which still afflicts the sensitive: "The human voice is distressing to me amid the whirl and the whistling." Miss Emily Eden knew this trial—none better: "I should not recommend travelling habitually by the railroad with Mr Macaulay.

The more that machine screeches and squeals, the louder he talks."

Many Conservatives cherished the conviction that the railways were only a temporary nuisance, or at least one that would not be aggravated. Zenobia (in *Endymion*) " still mourned over the concession of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway in a moment of Liberal infatuation, but flattered herself that any extension of the railway system might certainly be arrested." *Punch* has a picture (1850, vol. xix., p. 164) of a vinous old gentleman expressing his opinion : " Railroads, Sir ? I hate Railroads, and I shall be very glad when they're done away with, and we've got the coaches again." To thousands they meant impoverishment and bankruptcy. It is from the pages of Surtees and other contemporary writers that we realize the irresistible advance of the steam-engine — how it would suddenly appear in the countryside and work havoc on postboys and stage-coachmen and inns [6] and turnpikes and country towns. Volumes might be written full of such tragedies. Take, for instance, the sad case of Mr Joe Cherriper in *Ask Mamma* (1858) :

" The Crooked Billet Hotel and Posting-house on the Bushmead Road had been severed from society by the Crumpletin Railway. It had indeed been cut off in the prime of life : for Joe Cherriper, the velvet-collared doeskin-gloved Jehu of the fast Regulator coach, had backed his opinion of the preference of the public for horse transit over steam, by laying out several hundred pounds of his accumulated fees upon the premises, just as the surveyors were setting out the line.

" ' A rally might be 'andy enough for goods and easy merchandise,' Joe said, ' but as to gents ever travellin' by sich contraband means, that was utterly and entirely out of the question. Never would 'appen so long as there was a well-appointed coach like the Regulator to be 'ad.' . . .

" One fine summer's afternoon a snorting steam-engine came puffing and panting through the country upon a private road of its own, drawing after it the accumulated

rank, beauty, and fashion of a wide district to open the railway, which presently sucked up all the trade and traffic of the country. The Crooked Billet fell from a first-class wayside house at which eight coaches changed horses twice a day, into a very seedy unfrequented place."

Or the town of Hinton :

" Like the natives of most isolated places, the Hintonians were very self-sufficient, firmly believing that there were no such conjurers as themselves ; and when the Crumpletin railway was projected, they resolved that it would ruin their town, and so they opposed it to a man, and succeeded in driving it several miles off, thus scattering their trade among other places along the line. Year by year the bonnet and mantle shops grew less gay, the ribbons less attractive, until shop after shop lapsed into a sort of store, hardware on one side, and millinery, perhaps, on the other. But the greatest fall of all was that of the ' Fox and Hounds' Hotel and Posting-house. This spacious hostelry had apparently been built with a view to accommodating everybody ; and, at the time of our story, it loomed in deserted grandeur in the great grass-grown market-place."

The poor old waiter, Peter, thus lamented the change :

" ' Oh dear, Sir ! ' he would say, as he showed a stranger the club-room, once the eighth wonder of the world, ' oh dear, Sir ! I never thought to see things come to this pass. This room, Sir, used to be occupied night after night, and every Wednesday we had more company than it could possibly hold. Now we have nothing but a miserable three-and-sixpence a head once a month, with Sir Moses in the chair, and a shilling a bottle for corkage. Formerly we had six shillings a bottle for port and five for sherry, which, as our decanters didn't hold three parts, was pretty good pay.' "

Trollope describes the degeneration of just such another town—Courcy, in *Doctor Thorne* (1858) :

" Here stood the Red Lion ; had it been called the Brown Lion, the nomenclature would have been still more strictly correct ; and here, in the old days of coaching, some life had been wont to stir itself at those hours in the

day and night when the Freetraders, Tallyhoes, and Royal Mails changed their horses. But now there was a railway station a mile and a half distant, and the moving life of the town of Courcy was confined to the Red Lion omnibus, which seemed to pass its entire time in going up and down between the town and the station, quite unembarrassed by any great weight of passengers. . . . Trade, therefore, at Courcy, had not thriven since the railway had opened: and, indeed, had any patient inquirer stood at the Cross through one entire day, counting the customers who entered the neighbouring shops, he might well have wondered that any shops in Courcy could be left open. . . .

" 'Why, luke at this 'ere town,' continued he of the sieve, 'the grass be a-growing in the very streets;—I zees who's a-coming and who's a-going. Nobody's a-coming and nobody's a-going;—that can't be no gude.' " These unfortunate victims of progress had a champion in Colonel Sibthorp, Member for Lincoln, the eccentric ultra-Protestant, ultra-Tory, ultra-Protectionist, who exclaimed in the House of Commons that he abominated all railroads, and that they had ruined innkeepers and posting-masters. He is drawn in *Punch* (1844, vol. vi., p. 83) as Don Quixote, tilting at an oncoming steam-engine. To indicate how quickly the effect of railways was felt, Acworth mentions that turnpike tolls in Wiltshire that were let in 1841 for £1992 produced only £654 in 1842. Forty coaches which had run daily through Northampton were all dead within six months of the opening of the London and Birmingham Railway. Similar results followed within a few weeks in 1842 in the case of the Edinburgh and Glasgow line.[7] Lady Cowper (afterwards Lady Palmerston) wrote in 1839: " Great complaints at the 'Green Man' of the railroad taking all the travellers. I fear it will be ruin to posting. The tax must clearly be taken off post-horses as a little help." Two thousand horses used to be kept in the inns at Hounslow. But no exemption from taxes could save them; the old system of travel was doomed. In 1851 (vol. xxi., p. 269) Mr Punch introduces us to his " Museum of Extinct

Races," which includes specimens of "A Repealer," "A Protectionist," "Old Watchman" and "Stage Coachman"—"an animal so rare that there is scarcely a specimen left . . . it has gradually disappeared from the face of the country, and it would be impossible to say what has become of the lost *genus*."

No one knows what became of the poor old superfluous stage-coachmen and postboys,[8] and of the thousands of post-horses that stood at Hounslow; they were a necessary sacrifice to the march of progress. Meanwhile the new invention made a triumphant entry.

When the first train ran from Hull to Selby, on 2nd July 1840, "flags and decorations were on every side. Presently the train appeared amid intense excitement and applause. It ran rather slowly, and the engine was decked with flags and garlands; it had a great copper hump on its back which glittered in the sun, and it was not unlike such engines *as are shown in museums nowadays*."[9] (Thus was *Punch's* "Stage Coachman" avenged.) Even Surtees, though as a hunting man he hated railways, praised their convenience.[10] In *Plain or Ringlets* (1850), after enumerating other things which had in the two previous decades added to the amenities of a country gentleman's life—cheaper and better newspapers, increased sobriety, *Punch* and the penny post—he instances the railway:

"The grand, the crowning benefit of all, however, were railways. Without them, cheap postage, cheap papers, cheap literature, extended post-offices, would have been inefficient, for the old coaches would never have carried the quantity of matter modern times have evoked. Who does not remember the last spasmodic efforts of the unwashed, worn-out old vehicles and weak horses to compete with the accumulating traffic in the neighbourhood of a newly-waking line, and the anathemas of coachmen and guards, and their brandified predictions of a speedy return to the road? But at a certain hour of a certain day, without noise, or boast, or effort, came the smoothly-gliding engine, whisking as many passengers along as would have filled

the old coaches for a week, unlocking the country for miles, and bringing parties within a few hours of each other who had formerly been separated for days ; large, roomy, prebendal-stall-fitted-up like vehicles usurped the place of little stuffy, straw-bedded stages, into which people packed on the mutual accommodation principle, you letting me put my arm here, I letting you put your leg there. So they toiled on through a live-long day, cramped, squeezed, and confined, making about the same progress that they do now in a couple of hours with the greatest ease and enjoyment."

Queen Victoria assigned the railroad a still higher function :

" The progress of the railroad will make an immense difference in India, and tend more than anything else to bring about civilization, and will in the end facilitate the spread of Christianity, which hitherto has made but very slow progress." [11]

On the whole, the Victorian was very pleased with his railways : driven along at perhaps forty miles an hour, he had a sense of being a superman in comparison with his slow-going forefathers. Moreover, they gave employment and added to the national wealth. " What with these railroads," said the Duke of Bellamont (in *Tancred*), " even the condition of the poor, which I admit was lately far from satisfactory, is infinitely improved. Every man has work who needs it, and wages are even high." But his son gloomily replied : " I see nothing in this fresh development of material industry but fresh causes of moral deterioration."

Matthew Arnold also refused to join in the applause :

" Your middle-class man thinks it the highest pitch of development and civilization when his letters are carried twelve times a day from Islington to Camberwell and from Camberwell to Islington, and if railway trains run to and fro between them every quarter of an hour. He thinks it is nothing that the trains only carry him from an illiberal, dismal life at Islington to an illiberal, dismal life

at Camberwell; and the letters only tell him that such is the life there." As to their political ramifications, Bagehot remarked rather significantly (1867) that there were two hundred "Members for the railways" in the existing House of Commons.

There seems to have been a primeval era in railroad travel, beginning with 1830 (when Huskisson met so tragic a fate at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester line), and lasting for rather more than ten years, until Hudson began his activities. In those early days the carriages were modelled on the old stage-coach; the guards also were links with the past. "To carry out the stage-coach idea, the guards in charge of the train wore red coats and sat on a seat on the top of the end carriage. From this seat, by turning a handle, they were able to put on a brake." [12] Stations were often named after taverns—*e.g.* the "Bricklayers' Arms." Luggage was, for years, carried on the roofs of carriages, as appears in Frith's *Railway Station* (1862). Third-class travel was very primitive and uncomfortable. It is thus described by Canon Cooper Scott:

"The value of the third-class passenger as a dividend-paying person had not dawned upon the minds of railway proprietors. He was a person to be discouraged, tortured; indeed every obstacle must be placed in the way of his travelling third-class. . . . The carriage appointed for the use of a third-class passenger was a long square box, with sides breast-high, and above that entirely open to the sky, so that he was soaked in wet weather, either directly from the clouds, or indirectly from the umbrellas of his fellow-travellers, while in hot weather he was baked by the sun, which blistered the seats of the carriages; was covered with blacks and smuts from the engine, and now and then had to stamp out a spark which sometimes burned a hole in the traveller's clothes before it reached the floor." Acworth (*Railways of England*, p. 41) says there was a theory that whatever was done for the third-class passenger was done as a concession and a favour—"for the advantage

THE RAILWAY JUGGERNAUT OF 1845

The Railway speculation, which began in 1845, claimed thousands of victims. Hudson, "The Railway King," was at the height of his power. The final crash took place in 1847, & in 1849 Hudson had to resign his directorships & go abroad.

(*See p.* 219)

of the poorer classes"—never for profit. In 1844, in the House of Commons, Roebuck exclaimed against the bad treatment of the poor travellers; they were exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and their "third-class" trains took twenty-four hours over a journey which "first-class" trains completed in six. Sir Robert Peel deprecated Parliamentary interference. In 1845 *Punch* declared that third-class carriages were "little better than locomotive sheep-pens," and drew a picture of a man angling in the flooded floor of his compartment. In *Punch's Almanack* for 1846 various "Railway Miseries" are depicted—people go to the wrong stations, luggage goes astray, there is a terrible rush for refreshments at Wolverton station, etc., but Surtees sensibly remarks in *Ask Mamma*:

"Why, the worst third class that ever was put next the engine is infinitely better than the inside of the best of them [the coaches] used to be, to say nothing of the speed. As to the outsides of the old coaches, with their roastings, their soakings, their freezings, and their smotherings with dust, one cannot but feel that the establishment of railways was a downright prolongation of life. Then the coach refreshments, or want of refreshments rather; the turning out at all hours to breakfast, dine or sup, just as the coach reached the house of a proprietor 'wot oss'd it,' and the cool incivility of everybody about the place. Anything was good enough for a coach passenger."

There can be no doubt that railway miseries were trifling in comparison with stage-coach miseries.

The use, and necessity, of the railroad was, for some purposes, realized rather slowly. Troops appear to have been first moved by rail in August 1842 to quell riots in Stalybridge and Manchester, which would have been "sufficiently alarming," wrote Greville, "but for the railroads, which enabled the Government to pour troops into the disturbed district and extinguish the conflagration at once." All the troops that could be spared from London were sent, including a regiment of the Guards. The next year the Judges went by rail to Stafford to try rioters. In

those days travel was a mixed affair of rail and coach (or post-chaise). When Mr Dombey went for relaxation to Leamington, Dickens does not say where he detrained; but post-horses were waiting for him at the station, and certainly he and Major Bagstock had a long drive, for they stopped somewhere for lunch and only reached Leamington in the evening. When the Queen went to Cambridge in 1847 she drove from Buckingham Palace to Tottenham, and there entered the Eastern Counties train, "the great Railway King, Hudson himself, going with us." Returning from Manchester in 1851, she left the train at Watford at 5 P.M., and thence posted to Windsor, arriving at 7.30 P.M. By 1843, it must be remembered, only 1800 miles of track were open, and as a rule the inhabitant of a rural district was a long way from a station. At late as 1858, for instance, the nearest station to Aldeburgh was Ipswich, a distance of twenty-six miles.

The second period, the period of the boom, began in 1842. Disraeli describes the awakening in *Endymion*:

"One or two lines of railway, which had been long sleepily in formation, about this time were finished, and one or two lines of railway which had been finished for some time and were unnoticed, announced dividends, and not contemptible ones. Suddenly there was a general feeling in the country that its capital should be invested in railways; that the whole surface of the land should be transformed, and covered as by a network, with these mighty means of communication." And in *Lord George Bentinck* he notices the economic effect:

"Suddenly, and for several years, an additional sum of 13,000,000 of pounds sterling a year was spent in the wages of our native industry; 200,000 able-bodied labourers received each upon an average 22s. a week, stimulating the revenue both in excise and customs by their enormous consumption of malt and spirits, tobacco and tea. This was the main cause of the contrast between the England of 1841 and the England of 1845."

Now began the meteoric career of George Hudson. By

1844 he had 1016 miles under his control. In 1845 the railway mania was at its height. *Punch* makes a very proper observation (vol. viii., p. 91): "For our own parts we don't like to see Members of Parliament dabbling in railway speculations, which they themselves have the opportunity of unduly favouring in the House of Commons." Later in the year we have the well-known cartoon, "The Juggernaut"—an immense engine called Speculation, with a demon clinging round its funnel, crushing along over its prostrate worshippers; and "King Hudson's Levee"—the great man sitting in state with bishops, peers, lawyers, soldiers, fair ladies and footmen grovelling before him. In October, Prince Albert writing to Wilberforce, then Dean of Westminster, on the duties of bishops, includes that of reproving "the recklessness and wickedness of the projectors of railway schemes, who having no funds themselves acquire riches at the expense of others, their dupes." In November Greville writes:

"It has been during the last two months that the rage for railroad speculation reached its height, was checked by a sudden panic in full career, and is now reviving again, though not by any means promising to recover its pristine vigour. I met one day in the middle of it the Governor of the Bank, Robarts, who told me that he never remembered in all his experience anything like the present speculation, that the operations of 1825, which led to the great panic, were nothing to it, and that there could not fail to be a fearful reaction. The reaction came sooner than anybody expected, but though it has blown many of the bubbles into the air, it has not been so complete and so ruinous as many of the wise men of the East still expect and predict. It is incredible how people have been tempted to speculate; half the fine ladies have been dabbling in stocks, and even the most unlikely have not been able to refrain from gambling in shares; even I myself (though in a very small degree), for the warning voice of the Governor of the Bank has never been out of my ears." In 1847 Railway Stocks fell with a crash, the depression in ten leading companies

amounting to £78,000,000. In 1849 came the fall of Hudson. There was rejoicing at his degradation, said Greville, but "the people who ought to feel most degraded are those who were foolish or mean enough to subscribe to the Hudson Testimonial, and all the greedy, needy, fine people who paid abject court to him in order to obtain slices of his good things." (He has had many successors, with similar courtiers.) On 17th May, Hudson, who was Member for Sunderland, tried to explain his position in the House of Commons, but was heard in silence. After this he lived much abroad, but till 1859 appears to have retained his seat at Sunderland, and ten years later was entertained at a banquet there "in recognition of his past services to the town and port."

He was an unscrupulous speculator who ruined thousands, but to his great ability and energy was due an enormous development of the railway system, and a very great amount of employment. He it was who initiated the new railway era. In 1843 there were 1800 miles open, 3,000,000 passengers were carried weekly, and the authorized capital was £70,000,000, of which £60,000,000 were paid up. In 1889 there were 20,000 miles of rail, paid-up capital amounted to £800,000,000 and the number of passengers had increased forty-fold. The carriages gradually grew more comfortable, the great drawback still being the absence of lavatory accommodation; it was long before it occurred to the Victorian railway director that what was impossible on a coach might be easily attainable in a train. A palatial carriage was made for the Queen, consisting of a spacious salon communicating with an ordinary six-seated compartment. We read of Lady Ashburton engaging this carriage for a journey to Scotland and occupying it alone, while Mrs Carlyle was placed in the compartment with Carlyle and the family doctor and Lady Ashburton's maid. Mrs Carlyle was offended by this arrangement and refused to travel home in the same way. The first dining-car appeared in November 1879, and ran on the Great Northern from King's Cross to Leeds.

The quiet country towns and villages which had no railway stations sank into a deep lethargy : the coaches, with their cheerful horn-blowing, ceased to pass through their streets, or stop to change horses at their inns ; the post-chaises also gradually vanished, and with them the slow wagons in which humbler folk had travelled. The road lost its liveliness and animation. With the rapid growth of great cities, small towns like Hinton and Courcy decayed, and their inhabitants (as Trollope said) found nothing to console them in " the glories of Glasgow, with her flourishing banks ; of London, with its third million of inhabitants." The life of the small town suffered in another way—the great people of the neighbourhood sought their pleasures more and more in London ; the balls and assemblies of the county town fell into abeyance. The " Town House " was closed, where once the wealthy nobleman had kept up a sort of provincial state in the capital of his county.[13]

Generally speaking, the influence of the railroad was democratic ; and against this influence it was vain to fight. " In the early days of the railway," wrote G. W. E. Russell, " great people travelled majestically, though insecurely, in their own carriages fastened on to railway-trucks." So Moreton Frewen (in *Melton Mowbray and Other Memories*) recalls a journey made in 1858 from Rye to Leicestershire—he and his family were " seated in the coach itself, never in the railway compartment." Granville wrote to Canning in 1856 from Hof : " Marie and I travelled with aristocratic *morgue* in our own carriage. Orloff was in the train." These travellers remind one of Thackeray's Marchioness of Carabas, who sat in her own chariot while crossing the Channel and therein was sick. The next stage was to retreat into the railway carriage, engaging all the seats in the compartment " to avoid the horror of publicity." This must have been very expensive for a solitary long-distance traveller. Lady Vanilla (in *Sybil*), through not taking this precaution, had a trying experience on her trip from Birmingham. " She came up with Lady Laura, and two of

the most gentlemanlike men sitting opposite her—never met, she says, two more intelligent men. She begged one of them at Wolverhampton to change seats with her, and he was most politely willing to comply with her wishes, only it was necessary that his companion should move at the same time, for they were chained together." [14] Lord de Mowbray, in the same story, was uneasy about the railroad—"I fear it has a dangerous tendency to equality." At any rate with its arrival the splendour of equipages diminished. "Railways," wrote Surtees in 1858, "have taken the starch out of country magnificence as well as out of town. Time was when a visitor could hardly drive up to a great man's door in a po'chay—now it would be considered very magnificent—a buss, or a one-oss fly being more likely the conveyance." Bagehot, to illustrate the same degeneration, quotes Thackeray: "The last Duke of St David's used to cover the north road with his carriages; landladies and waiters bowed before him. The present Duke sneaks away from a railway station, smoking a cigar, in a brougham." Lecky, after describing the pomp of eighteenth-century travel, observes: "In this respect the moral and political influence of railways in levelling social distinctions has been very great."

There is something remarkable in the circumstance that the introduction of railways synchronized with the passing of the Reform Bill. Each of these was a portentous event, and of each the full effect made itself felt only by degrees. Very much the same people opposed the one as the other, and from very much the same sentiments; there were retrograde folk who would have nothing to do with either. Just as Croker refused to sit in a Reform Parliament, so many an old-fashioned gentleman declined on principle to sit in a railway carriage. The man of 1867, who could look back on the pre-Railway and pre-Reform era, had seen a social and political change which could scarcely be paralleled by any other period of equal length in our history.

NOTES

[1] *Small Talk at Wreyland* (Cecil Torr), p. 69.

[2] In 1843 Sir Robert Peel sent the Prince "a little book which is published every month" containing time-tables. Perhaps this was an early *Bradshaw*; but there were other guides—*Drake's Road Book of the London and Brighton Railway*, *The Osborne Guide*, etc.

[3] *The Railways of England* (W. M. Acworth), pp. 17, 18.

[4] Quoted in *The Times*, 29th June 1925.

[5] *Small Talk at Wreyland* (Cecil Torr), p. 68.

[6] A landlady on the road from Chippenham to London told a traveller (1844): "We are just come into the house. The people afore us was ruined; since the railroad came this way nobody wants horses" (*The English Inn, Past and Present* (Richardson and Eberlein), p. 49).

[7] *Railways of England*, pp. 21, 23.

[8] Mr Sam Weller propounded a very attractive and poetical theory: "Wenever they feels theirselves gettin' stiff and past their work, they just rides off together, wun postboy to a pair in the usual way; wot becomes on 'em nobody knows, but it's wery probable as they starts away to take their pleasure in some other world, for there ain't a man alive as ever see, either a donkey or a post-boy, a-takin' his pleasure in this!" At Brentwood, as late as 1871, a visitor found relays of post-horses at "The White Hart" with "aged postlads, one of whom told us that the gentry hereabouts still decline to travel to town by the rail, but ride post in their carriages to and from London" (*The English Inn, Past and Present* (Richardson and Eberlein), p. 60).

[9] *Things that Were* (Canon Cooper Scott), p. 5.

[10] *Robert Smith Surtees* (by Himself and E. D. Cunning), p. 331.

[11] Letter to Lord Dalhousie, 24th November 1854.

[12] *Things that Were* (Canon Cooper Scott), p. 8.

[13] In the early eighteenth century the Duke of Norfolk made his annual progress to "Our Palace of Norwich," and kept open house there for a fortnight.

[14] The Duke of Wellington to Lady Salisbury (6th September 1850): "I confess that I cannot bear seeing or hearing of Ladies going alone by the Trains on the Rail Roads. It is true that you have with you your children. But still the protection of a Gentleman is necessary" (*A Great Man's Friendship*, p. 93). The Duke attributed railway accidents to want of discipline: "Nobody can obey the orders which he receives!" (*ibid.*, p. 113).

VIII

AN AGE OF SERIOUSNESS

Matthew Arnold's Indictment of Middle Classes—Yet they had "Seriousness," a Saving Virtue—Pre-Victorian Statesmen not "Serious"—Serious Gladstone—Gladstone & the *Zeitgeist*—Accused of Hypocrisy — Dr Arnold — Athleticism — Christian Socialism — Domesticity — Charity — Philanthropy — Nurses—Sabbatarianism—Committee Folk—Dullness—Women's Lives—Victoria on Women's Rights—A Religious Age—Religious Persecutions—Attitude of Pre-Reform Church to Dissenters & Roman Catholics—Stagnation of the Church of England—The Victorian Sunday—Shaftesbury—Church of England & Nonconformity—Church of England & Roman Catholics—Divisions in Church of England — Evangelicals & Ritualists—Attacks on Broad Churchmen—High & Low Churchmen unite against Broad Churchmen—Religion of the Court—Seriousness degenerates into Narrowness—Victorians accused of Insincerity—Insincerity in Politics—Mass Meetings—The Press—Eulogists of Progress—Some disbelieved in it—Short Reign of Middle Classes—Reasons of their Weakness—Despised by Aristocracy—Pessimism in 1866-1867—Later Influence of Imperialism, &c.—Great Social Changes—Contrasts of the Period—Life Safer but Duller—Palmerston the Enduring Type of Englishman

STATESMEN with the highest reputations for wisdom have often proved the most incapable of prophets. The wise men of 1832 prophesied terrible political disasters as the certain results of Reform—the downfall of the Throne, the overturn of the Church, the extinction of the House of Lords, the insecurity of private property. But in 1867 all these institutions were found to be far more firmly established, or at least far less threatened, than in 1832. In 1867 most men of light and leading were vying with one another in extolling their own day as secure and prosperous. Certainly the wealth of the country had increased enormously, and the class that had made the

greatest advance in material prosperity was the middle class. Neither of the middle class nor of the "working" class (of which about a million had just been enfranchised) was it profitable for public men to speak otherwise than in the language of compliment. It could, indeed, scarcely be expected of a Member of Parliament that he should be uncivil to his constituents.

We are more likely to get an independent judgment on the state of the nation (whether the judgment be right or wrong) in a Letter addressed about this time to "My Countrymen" by a distinguished poet and critic. This Letter brought down on Matthew Arnold a storm of criticism, for therein he was bold enough to remind Englishmen that it was possible for a nation, as for a man, to gain the whole world and yet lose its soul.

The Letter, which is dated "Grub Street, 19th March 1866," is principally addressed to Arnold's middle-class fellow-countrymen, who, as both their friends and their enemies admitted, had risen to a position of such "preponderating importance" of recent years, and were now nearing the end of their brief hegemony. Arnold pours scorn on them and on their flatterers of the Press—on *The Daily News*, which extolled them as "the most independent and active and enlightened class of English society," and *The Morning Star*, which wrote of "the earnest good sense which characterizes Manchester." He dwells upon their stupid satisfaction with their own middle-class education; he tells them that they have no ideal beyond that of doing "a roaring trade"; he declares that their religion is "narrow, unintelligent, repulsive"; that their notion of relaxation is "a lecture on teetotalism or nunneries." As to foreign policy, they were responsible for the Crimean War; in the Danish crisis they threatened Germany with France, and then left Denmark to her fate; in the American Civil War they were "full of coldness, slights and sermons" for the Federals, and, as soon as the Federals were victorious, discovered that they had always wished them well. He compares them unfavourably with aristocracy. His

"foreign friends" remark that the rulers of England in 1815 grasped the difficulties of that time:

"Their time was a time for energy, and they succeeded in it, perfectly. Our time is a time for intelligence, and you are not succeeding in it at all."

In fine, the rich middle class is "testy, absolute, ill-acquainted with foreign matters, a little ignoble, very dull to perceive when it is making itself ridiculous."

But yet there was something to be said for this unattractive middle class. One of Matthew Arnold's imaginary friends puts in this plea for them:

"Mean and ignoble as our middle class looks, it has this capital virtue, it has seriousness. With frivolity, cultured or uncultured, you can do nothing; but with seriousness there is always hope."

And by seriousness this age of Transition was most eminently distinguished. Serious folk were in the ascendant.[1] Serious folk were offended by the "frivolous Ha! Ha! style" of Palmerston, the foremost Englishman of his day. Serious John Bright called him "that aged charlatan, that hoary sinner"; "a man that has age, but who with age has not the gravity of age." Seriousness was a new demand upon statesmen, and Palmerston was born in the eighteenth century, when great men were not expected to sacrifice at this shrine. Walpole "talked bawdy" after dinner. Charles Fox was a gambler. Even Pitt indulged in "bear-fights," and on a festive occasion suffered his face to be blacked with a burnt cork. Canning wrote *The Needy Knife-Grinder* and other non-serious verses. Melbourne, while receiving deputations of serious men, "became absorbed in blowing a feather or suddenly cracked an unseemly joke." Derby was far from serious on the race-course: "There he was" (wrote Greville in 1851), "in the midst of a crowd of blacklegs, betting men, and loose characters of every description, in uproarious spirits, chaffing, rowing, and shouting with laughter and joking." Palmerston enjoyed chaffing a butcher from the hustings.

All these great men nourished serious ambitions, and

lived, while in office, laborious lives; but they welcomed the hour of relaxation, and their countrymen thought none the worse of them if they amused their leisure by gaming or hunting or racing or making love. It might be said of any of them, as Pope said of Walpole:

> "Seen him I have; but in his happier hour
> Of social pleasure ill-exchanged for power.
> Seen him uncumbered with the venal tribe,
> Smile without art and win without a bribe."

Disraeli in his younger days was notorious for his extravagances; his dress by itself must have offended serious folk. In 1828 he appeared at dinner in "green velvet trowsers, a canary-coloured waistcoat, low shoes, silver buckles, lace at his wrists, and his hair in ringlets." At another dinner-party in 1833 he was wearing "a black velvet coat lined with satin, purple trowsers with a gold band running down the outside seam, a scarlet waistcoat, long lace ruffles falling down to the tips of his fingers, white gloves, with several brilliant rings outside them, and long black ringlets rippling down upon his shoulders." On this occasion his hostess was Mrs Norton, who told him that her eldest brother was "the only respectable one in the family, and that is because he has a liver complaint." Her sister, Mrs Blackwood (afterwards Lady Dufferin), informed him: "You see Georgy's the beauty, and Carry's the wit, and I ought to be the good one, but I am not."

About the same time as Disraeli, thus gorgeously and fantastically arrayed, was enjoying the society of Sheridan's witty and beautiful daughters, Gladstone (*æt.* 23) was entering in his Diary: "I have now familiarized myself with maxims sanctioning and encouraging a degree of intercourse with Society, perhaps attended with much risk. . . . Nor do I now think myself warranted in withholding from the practices of my fellow-men except when they really *involve* an encouragement of sin, in which case I do certainly rank races and theatres." In Gladstone a public man appeared on the scene who not only had serious aims and

ambitions, but was also *externally* both serious and religious. In his earlier years he was a strict Sabbatarian : on Sundays he would not dine out—even with Peel. As regards Sunday church attendance, most people in his day were, as he himself termed it, " oncers " ; Gladstone was all his life a " twicer," and generally a " thricer." We may once for all heartily agree with the Prince Consort that he was " a man of the strictest feelings of honour and of the purest mind." So was William Pitt ; but Pitt could unbend in private life and drink his four bottles. Gladstone was a man of quite another era, of the era of seriousness—" this agitated and expectant age," as he himself described it, the age which his biographer has called " intensely serious." " Not for two centuries," writes Lord Morley, " since the historic strife of Anglican and Puritan, had our island produced a ruler in whom the religious motive was paramount in the like degree. He was not only a political force but a moral force." And not only in seriousness was he typical of his time ; he also conformed to its political development. Disraeli has been credited with a deep policy of exalting the Throne and of encouraging Imperial sentiment, as countering forces to the seemingly resistless movement towards democracy ; but Gladstone let the current of the age sweep him along with it. Beginning as a high Tory and nominee of the Duke of Newcastle, he followed Peel in the path of Liberal-Conservatism, he followed Palmerston in the path of Conservative-Liberalism, he followed Bright in the path of suffrage-extension and Radicalism ; later he left Bright behind him and became an utter demagogue, a stirrer-up of the " Masses " against the " Classes." But during the whole of this strange pilgrimage he surrounded himself with a moral atmosphere, which availed him in the end to capture the Nonconformists ; these forgave even the Ritualism of this seriously-minded man. It is possible that on his side he over-estimated their strength ; in Disraeli's opinion he mistook their " clamour " for " the voice of the nation."

Professor Morgan has said that the history of Gladstone's

mind was "like a dramatization of the history of the time." From that time we are now separated as by a gulf, and Gladstone's political principles have ceased to interest politicians ; it is difficult indeed to say what they were, after enumerating the right of "Self-Determination" for small countries, and Public Economy (for which latter, indeed, his memory deserves to be honoured). One modern author writes of him, "For the majority of men it is as if Gladstone never existed" ; another draws attention to "the disproportion between his moral energies and their results." It is undoubtedly true that Gladstone's party, now a remnant and torn by faction, rarely invokes his memory, while Disraeli's ideas still inspire our modern Conservatives and their leader. But if Gladstone can be partly understood on the assumption that he shaped his political course in accordance with the *Zeitgeist*, there yet remains of his character much that is inexplicable. Harcourt said of Disraeli : "I should like, if it were possible, to penetrate the secret of his life." Has anyone ever penetrated the secret of Gladstone's complex nature ? Is he not, like Disraeli, an enigma ? Disraeli probably understood Disraeli, but did even Gladstone understand Gladstone ? His mind was as subtle as a schoolman's. Lord Morley condemns in the Tractarians their "dreadful tangle of economies and reserves," and makes this accountable for "something that was often under the evil name of sophistry suspected and disliked in Mr Gladstone himself, in his speeches, his writings, and even in his public acts." Again : "It is idle to ignore in Mr Gladstone's style an over-refining in words, an excess of qualifying propositions, a disproportionate impressiveness in verbal shadings without real difference." His own father (December 1847) charged him with "a natural closeness in your disposition, with a reserve towards those who may think that they have some claim to your confidence." Clarendon, more succinctly, refers to him as "the Jesuit." In his old age Lord Morley's judgment of this side of his chief's character did not lessen in severity : "He would never have given an undertaking in which he could not

discover, if need be, some *ambiguity* which permitted an escape. His mind was like that." The biographer of Disraeli condemns "the un-English casuistry which was inwoven in his [Gladstone's] moral texture." Akin to this accusation is that of hypocrisy. Disraeli denounced him as "a Tartuffe." He certainly showed a tendency to unctuousness. When Mr Pecksniff was called a scoundrel, he replied: "I am not sorry, I am really not sorry that this little incident has happened." Gladstone, having lost his Savings Bank Money Bill (1861), enters in his Diary: "This ought to be very good for me; and I earnestly wish to make it so." He had another un-English characteristic: he is the Joseph Toplady Falconet of Disraeli's unfinished novel, who suffered from "a complete deficiency in the sense of humour." No man with even a rudimentary sense of humour could have criticized *Nicholas Nickleby*: "No Church in the book, and its motives are not those of religion." Granville delicately savoured this deficiency: "He is devoted to Homer. He is going to *réhabiliter* Helen, whom he has discovered to be a much-injured woman." [2]

His casuistry and his want of humour differentiated him from the majority of his countrymen, but his reputation for seriousness was to prove a tower of strength to him in the thirty years that followed our age of Transition. And there is no reason to doubt his sincerity. Though he may have unconsciously deceived himself, he was too upright a man designedly to deceive others. A man must be taken to be sincere when he journalizes. When in 1865 he lost his seat for Oxford University, he wrote in his Diary:

"And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee."

And on his first birthday after becoming Prime Minister:

"The Almighty seems to sustain and spare me for some purpose of His own, deeply unworthy as I know myself to be. Glory be to His name."

Peel was a serious man; but Gladstone was the first Prime Minister of England who believed himself to be the chosen instrument of God.

There was another great influence that made for seriousness in this age—the influence of Dr Arnold, who set up for the upper middle-class Englishman an ἦθος that still endures. Provost Hawkins prophesied that Arnold, if appointed to Rugby, "would change the face of education all through the public schools of England." The change took place, but it needs an effort to realize how great it was. We find it hard now to think of public schools except as religious and moral places, with grave headmasters, earnest and efficient assistant masters, and conscientious *præpostors*. But what was Eton in Keate's time?

"Religious instruction was reduced to zero. . . . The ancient and pious magnificence of Henry VI. now inspired a scene that was essentially little better than pagan, modified by an official Church of England varnish. At Eton, Mr Gladstone wrote of this period forty years after: 'The actual teaching of Christianity was all but dead, though happily none of its forms had been surrendered.'" [3]

"The public schools," said the Reverend Mr Bowdler, "are the very seats and nurseries of vice." [4] Arnold's aim was to turn Rugby into "a place of really Christian education," [5] and the Chapel sermon was the culmination of each week's moral and religious training. Not only was he a serious influence himself; he made his pupils react seriously on one another.[6] He impressed on them "a sense of responsibility and made them responsible for each other." "He found the *præpostor* a mere disciplinary convenience," says Mr Lytton Strachey, "and he converted them into an organ of government." He preached to the Sixth Form: "I cannot deny that you have an anxious duty—a duty which some might suppose was too heavy for your years." And truly it has proved a duty intolerably heavy, in thousands of cases, for a lad of sixteen, in addition to his own school work, to keep in order and exercise *moral* surveillance over

others who may be older and much bigger and more athletic than himself, and who may despise and hate him for his precocious intellect and inferior physique. But such was the system, and out of it grew—what Arnold perhaps neither foresaw nor desired—the cult of organized athletics, inspired by the theory that violent physical exercise was an antidote to the ancient and ineradicable vice of public schools; that a boy, unless strenuously occupied at all hours of the day, must fall to evil habits. Athletics, as was not surprising, soon developed from a means to an end, and have since attained their exaggerated importance. As to this excess, Dr Arnold's son appropriately quoted Epictetus:

"'It is a sign of *ἀφυία*' (that is, of a nature not finely tempered), 'to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way; the formation of the spirit and the character must be our real concern.' . . . The *εὐφύης* is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the *ἀφύης*, on the other hand, is our Philistine."

Sir William Harcourt, who (unlike Matthew Arnold) was not a public-school man, wrote in 1890: "Forty or fifty years ago, as I well remember, cricket was not unknown, football was occasionally played, boatraces were enjoyed, but they were the relaxation, not the occupation, of youth *in statu pupillari*."

Thus it came about that English society was reinforced by a great legion of moral and religious athletes, of a type which was quite inconceivable in the previous century. The Reverend Septimus Crisparkle (in *Edwin Drood*, 1869), with his cold baths and his boxing, is a character that could not have been encountered even by Mr Pickwick. A new religion arose, Muscular Christianity, "that noble and very necessary protest against the mawkishness of Evangelicals and the affectation of the Tractarians."[7] The author of

Tom Brown's Schooldays, himself an Oxford Cricket Blue, was a disciple of Maurice and the Principal of the Working Man's College, and linked Muscular Christianity with Christian Socialism ; he wrote a book on *The Manliness of Christ*, the title of which suggests that Christ Himself was a Muscular Christian. Another Rugbeian, Hansard, was a prominent Christian Socialist, as was also Bradley, a Rugby master and afterwards Dean of Westminster. So that, before the end of our period, the Church and the Bar [8] and the Services and the House of Commons and Business were being continually recruited by contingents from Rugby and its daughter schools—Clifton, Haileybury, Cheltenham and Marlborough, the pupils of Arnold and Temple and Farrar and Bradley and Percival. In all these schools the spirit is Rugbeian.[9] In politics the influence of these great headmasters tended to Liberalism, or even Radicalism, the Christian-Socialist side of which found expression in the founding of " Settlements " or " Missions " in London, or populous places not far from their schools ; here, besides Christianity, boxing and cricket and football are taught, and their aim is to " bridge over the gulf between the Classes and the Masses "—to use a phrase familiar forty years ago.

Domesticity was another mark of this serious age. The happy matrimonial lives of the Queen and of other conspicuous personages—Peel, Gladstone, Tennyson, Disraeli —were shining examples, and not only to middle-class homes. Not but what there was plenty of vice for those who went out to look for it. There were, for instance, Cremorne and the Argyll Rooms :

> " Who now remembers gay Cremorne
> And all its jaunty jills,
> And those wild whirling figures born
> Of Jullien's grand quadrilles ?
> With hats on head and morning coats
> There footed to his prancing notes
> Our partner-girls and we . . .

Who now recalls those crowded rooms
Of old yclept 'The Argyll,'
Where to the deep Drum-polka's booms
We swung in standard style ?
Whither have danced those damsels now ! "

There was "Baron" Nicholson's obscene entertainment of *Judge and Jury* at the Cyder Cellars, a scandal of the "fifties." In the Haymarket and its purlieus, haunts of debauchery were open all night, whose denizens might have challenged comparison with the "Abbesses" and "Nuns" of eighteenth-century Bow Street. But the virtuous or domestic life and the Bohemian or loose life were on different planes ; there were no *liaison* officers between them, as there are now. The Bohemian spent all his time in Bohemia.

Moreover a multitude of serious folk issued from these well-conducted homes to "do good" to their less virtuous neighbours. These worthy people might all have re-echoed the saying of Dr Arnold : "My love for any place, or person, or institution is exactly the measure of my desire to reform them." "The social conscience," says Professor Morgan, "was the creature of the Victorian age," and the amelioration of social conditions was a "novel and Victorian idea." Philanthropy, however, was not altogether a novelty. Mark Pattison wrote an Essay [10] on the Philanthropic Societies of the reign of Queen Anne ; but most of these were religious, though we must not forget the Bluecoat and Greencoat Schools, which dated from Anne's reign. Johnson, in his fourth *Idler*, praised the charity of his own age : "No sooner is a new species of misery brought to view, and a design of relieving it proposed, than every hand is open to contribute something." And he put in a plea for the proper endowment of hospitals : "When any establishment is found to be useful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent." But Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885), to whom Lord John Russell imputed "an overstrained zeal for the interests of humanity," was the father of organized philanthropy.

There was certainly a large field for Shaftesbury's energies. In 1847 Sir Robert Peel told the Comte de Jarnac that "our civilization has had the result of dooming numberless millions of human beings to an existence of perpetual labour, to profound ignorance, and to sufferings as difficult to remedy as they are undeserved." Shaftesbury devoted his life to alleviating the miseries caused by the Industrial Revolution. Health Reform, Reform of Lunatic Asylums,[11] Ragged Schools, Night Schools, Factory Acts—these were some of the causes in which he laboured. In Nursing Reform he took a great part. Dickens drew the Early Victorian nurse in Sairey Gamp, a miraculously human creature, but untrained, bibulous, somnolent, and neither clean nor kind. The same Victorian seriousness that reformed her prevented Dickens from giving us Mrs Gamp's complete portrait; for she was in the true succession to Mistress Quickly and Mrs Slipslop, and her real conversation was undoubtedly Rabelaisian. In fact, before the Crimean War the nurse's profession was considered scarcely respectable. "Lady Palmerston," wrote Greville (1st January 1856), "*par parenthèse*, thinks the Nursing Fund great humbug. 'The nurses are very good now; perhaps they do drink a little, but so do the ladies' monthly nurses, and nothing can be better than them; poor people, it must be so tiresome sitting up all night, and if they do drink a little too much they are turned away, and others got.'" In the age of Transition there is no change more sudden and striking than that from Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig[12] to the trained and uniformed nurses of Florence Nightingale. She believed that she owed more to Shaftesbury than to anyone else, and it was he who drafted the Instructions for the Sanitary Commission which was sent out to the Crimea.[13] There was, it is true, a less attractive side to Shaftesbury's earnestness. He was a fanatic of Sabbatarianism. He stopped for a time the Sunday post, he supported Days of Humiliation and the Sunday Closing of Museums. He was like Peter Bell the Second:

" One single point in his belief
From his organization sprung,
The heart-enrootèd faith, the chief
Ear in his doctrine's blighted sheaf,
That ' Happiness is wrong.' "

He was gloomy and puritanical, but he was one of the great influences of this age :

" Everyone who compares the tone of the world of wealth and leisure when Shaftesbury died with its tone when he entered Parliament will count among the causes the example of his noble life ; his success in softening in the manners of his age, as he had softened in its politics, the savage logic of the Industrial Revolution." [14]

This energetic philanthropy, which now occupied and even monopolized the lives of so many persons, too often degenerated into a fussy interference with their poorer neighbours. This was the age of Committees, the mechanism of which has a charm for minds not essentially charitable. The formation of Committees was as rife in the religious sphere as in the political. Dr Proudie, the Whig Bishop of Barchester, was an easy victim of this epidemic ; he was connected with " The University Improvement Committee " and " The Manufacturing Towns Morning and Evening Sunday School Society," and discussed with the Archbishop " The New Parochial Universal School Committee."

So Dickens writes (in *Edwin Drood*) of the charitable world :

" You were to go to the offices of the Haven of Philanthropy, and put your name down as a Member and a professing Philanthropist. Then, you were to pay up your subscription, get your card of membership and your riband and medal, and were evermore to live upon a platform, and evermore to say what Mr Honeythunder said, and what the Secretary said, and what the Vice-Secretary said." Mr Honeythunder was Chairman of " The Convened Chief Composite Committee of Control and District Philanthropists." Mrs Jellyby (in *Bleak House*) was interested in

Foreign Missions—including the settlement of Borrioboola Gha, which was promoted by "The East London Branch Aid Ramification." Her friend Mrs Pardiggle boasted: "I am a School lady, I am a Visiting lady, I am a Distributing lady, I am on the Local Linen Box Committee, and many general Committees." Her visitations of poor people were not welcomed. The brickmaker growled at her: "I wants it done and over. I wants an end of these liberties took with my place. I wants an end of being drawed like a badger. Now you're a-going to poll-pry and question according to custom." Dickens also attacks the false sentimentality which beset so many charitable persons, and was so provocative of hypocrisy. Mr Creakle, as a Middlesex magistrate, shows Traddles and David Copperfield over the prison whose inmates enjoy "plentiful repasts of choice quality." Uriah Heep, a prisoner, complains of the toughness of the beef, but "I have committed follies, gentlemen, and I ought to bear the consequences without repining." The magistrates are much affected by his humility. *Punch* frequently attacks this alleged cosseting of convicted criminals.

As charity declined into fussiness and "poll-pry" methods, so the Victorian domesticity was productive of a terrible dullness. Writing (in *Endymion*) of the "thirties," Disraeli remarks:

"The aristocracy probably has always found amusements adapted to the manners of the time and of the age in which they lived. The middle classes, half a century ago, had little distraction from their monotonous toil and melancholy anxieties, except, perhaps, what they found in religion and philanthropic societies. Their general life must have been very dull."

And of London:

"There were no Alhambras then, and no Cremornes, no palaces of crystal in terraced gardens, no casinos, no music-halls, no aquaria, no promenade concerts."

But men at any rate had their taverns and their clubs, besides the interest of business. For women, even of the upper classes, dullness was inevitable. Disraeli, Trollope,

Surtees—all tell the same tale. This is how the daughters of a duke occupied themselves :

" One knitted a purse, another adorned a slipper, a third emblazoned a page. Beautiful forms in counsel leant over frames glowing with embroidery, while two fair sisters more remote occasionally burst into melody, as they tried the passages of a new air, which had been communicated to them in the manuscript of some devoted friend." [15]

Or the daughters of a bishop :

" Olivia was reading a novel, Augusta was crossing a note to her bosom friend in Baker Street, and Netta was working diminutive coach wheels for the bottom of a petticoat." [16]

Or the daughters of a country squire :

" These, Clara, Flora, and Harriet, were very pretty and very highly educated—that is to say, they could do everything that is useless—play, draw, sing, dance, make wax-flowers, bead-stands, do decorative gilding, and crochet-work." [17]

It was generally accepted that women should play a subaltern part. The Early Victorian entirely agreed with Milton :

> " For contemplation he and valour formed,
> For softness she and sweet attractive grace."

Or with his own poet, Tennyson :

> " Man with the head and woman with the heart ;
> Man to command and woman to obey ;
> All else confusion."

Palmerston eulogized the heroism of women during the Mutiny in a strain worthy of the commercial gentleman at Todgers's who sang the praises of the Misses Pecksniff [18] :

" In the ordinary course of life the functions of women are to cheer the days of adversity, to soothe the hours of suffering, and to give additional brilliance to the sunshine of prosperity." But Palmerston himself walked " with a larger tether " ; he was known in his young days as Cupid, was reputed to be the father of a daughter born to his wife during her first husband's lifetime, and when almost an

octogenarian was cited as co-respondent in the Divorce Court.

Nor can Queen Victoria be classed among the feminists. "We women are not *made* for governing—and if we are good women, *if* we *are* to be *good* women, *feminine* and *amiable* and *domestic*, are *not fitted to reign*," she wrote to King Leopold in 1852. Twenty years later she denounced "this mad, wicked folly of 'Women's Rights.' . . . Lady —— ought to get a *good whipping*. . . . God created men and women different—then let them remain each in their own position." Opinion was certainly strong against the sex if they tried to leave "their own position." *Punch's Almanack* for 1853 is devoted to ridiculing the idea of women as police, footmen, bus-conductors, barristers, and Members of Parliament—all of which vocations they have since adorned, or are still adorning. They were also "warned off" sport. *Punch* (1846, vol. xi., p. 206) makes fun of the Duchess of Marlborough's pheasant-shooting; Lord Ladythorne held that "the sofa, and not the saddle," was the proper place for ladies. And in these years, as Surtees points out, the old domestic pursuits of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries became unfashionable—"pickling, preserving, and pressing people to eat"—the arts of "conserving, reserving and preserving," upon which Lady Bustle of *The Rambler* prided herself so greatly. In wealthy families the Mid-Victorian woman was trained to be ornamental rather than useful; she was Addison's "beautiful romantic animal, that may be adorned with furs and feathers, pearls and diamonds, ores and silks."

That this Transition age was a deeply religious one cannot be denied. Of the three divisions of the Church of England, the High Church was given an extraordinary stimulus, and ultimately a strange development, by the Oxford Movement; and the Broad Church by the teaching of Jowett and Maurice and Temple and others, and by the controversies which they provoked. Broad Church doctrines attracted, and kept within the Church, numbers of educated

men who in the eighteenth century would have been Deists or Unitarians or Socinians. Mr Gladstone stated that during the "forties" half the undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge were reading for Holy Orders. Clergymen of all denominations displayed an unbounded devotion. For this there was indeed scope, since the Industrial Revolution had created an enormous churchless population. Many a missionary, like Aubrey St Lys (in *Sybil*), "came among a hundred thousand heathen to preach '*The Unknown God.*'" The Evangelicals, both Church and Nonconformist, displayed extraordinary activity. In 1813 Wilberforce was attending May Meetings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Prayer Book and Homily Society, and the Jewish Meeting Anniversary: had he been living in 1853 he could have attended meetings right through the month of May.[19] In 1857 Spurgeon addressed an audience of 23,500 persons in the Crystal Palace. Roman Catholics, from being a quiet and self-contained community, became aggressive, and won many powerful adherents. All men held their religious opinions strongly; even Newman sometimes described himself as "very fierce." Manning and Phillpotts were men of ruthless character. Persecutions were frequent; and we are struck not only by the intensity of religious strife, but by the narrowness of religious views.

Before Reform the antagonism of Church and Dissent had been bitter enough; Churchmen stoned and maltreated Wesley's followers. But, until the middle classes were enfranchised, the struggle was an unequal one. Before Catholic Emancipation the Churchman regarded the Roman Catholic almost as a member of a subject race. Macaulay called Roman Catholicism (as the Roman called early Christianity) "that execrable superstition." Dr Croly demonstrated that George the Fourth met a premature death and that the Houses of Parliament were burned down because Catholic Emancipation was passed in 1829. But this *odium theologicum* was ancient and, to a great extent, political. As a whole, the tone of the Church of

Puritan: "Verily, Brother Ashley· between you & me, & the POST— we have made a nice mess of it."

In 1850 Lord Ashley (afterwards Lord Shaftesbury) stopped the Sunday posts, which brought him into disfavour with the Queen & people.

(*See p.* 240)

Lord Shaftesbury: "The dear Archbishop was quite right when he said that Battersea Park on a wet Sunday afternoon was much more enjoyable than the British Museum."

Lord Cairns: "If we could but get a drop of hot gin-and-water somewhere!"

Duke of Argyll: "Or whuskey!"

"Punch" again satirizes Lord Shaftesbury who, thirty-two years after he had stopped the Sunday posts, opposed the Sunday opening of the British Museum.

(*See p.* 240)

England was moderate; there was little "enthusiasm" within her borders. The Church before Reform was well represented by J. A. Froude's father. He was "rector of the parish, he was archdeacon, he was justice of the peace. He had a moderate fortune of his own, consisting chiefly in land." Bishop Marsh, a High Churchman of the old school, played whist with his candidates for Orders on the eve of their Ordination. Archbishop Manners Sutton was praised as "a prelate whose amiable demeanour, useful learning and conciliating habits of life particularly recommended his episcopal character." The position of some clergymen in great houses still savoured of the eighteenth, or even of the seventeenth, century. In 1833 Peel found at Apthorpe the Reverend Dr Bunney, "who performs all the duties of the Groom of the Chambers, and some of those of the housemaid. His civility in showing little conveniences to the guests is amazing." At Belvoir there was a Mr Thoroton, "a clergyman who sits at the head of the table, and appears to have the general management of the establishment." The clergy had the repute of liking the good things of this world. Melbourne told Queen Victoria at her Coronation, *àpropos* of a substantial breakfast set out in the Jerusalem Chamber, that "whenever the Clergy, or a Dean and Chapter, had anything to do with anything, there's sure to be plenty to eat." Croker heard Bishop Law of Elphin thus congratulate a newly mitred brother: "My dear Lord, I give you joy; you will now be able to provide for your large family; you will unite all your sons to the Church, and the Church to all your daughters." Trollope wrote of "those comfortable prebendaries, those gentlemanlike clerical doctors, those happy, well-used, well-fed minor canons," upon whom the Whig Bishop Proudie and his wife, and his chaplain Mr Slope, descended like hawks upon a dovecot. In the *Life of Bishop Wilberforce* we read of an innkeeper who was aggrieved by the discontinuance of "Confirmation Balls." A Bishop of Ely, to celebrate his enthronement, gave a ball to the county of Cambridge. Another bishop refused further translation because he had

already moved his port twice. The King of Hanover (formerly the Duke of Cumberland) dated the deterioration of the Church from the time when bishops were "permitted to lay aside their wigs, their purple coats, short cassocks and stockings, and cocked hats when appearing in public." The calm of the Church is typified in Trollope's story of how Mr Arabin was inducted into his new living: "Dr Grantly preached, and on the whole it was neither dull, nor bad, nor out of place. . . . The archdeacon's sermon, text, blessing and all was concluded within the half-hour. Then they shook hands with their Ullathorne friends, and returned to Plumstead. 'Twas thus that Mr Arabin read himself in at St Ewold's."

There were poor incumbents and very poor curates in the Early Victorian time, just as there were poor practitioners in every profession; but the prevalent notion of the Church was of a serene and comfortable institution, containing many erudite dignitaries. These led serious lives, but the seriousness was not stressed. After Reform, Whig attacks on Church temporalities aroused a combative temper, and the increased political power of Dissent strengthened the Evangelical party. The Whigs, not themselves traditionally religious, became involved in Sabbatarianism. As a symbol of this union we see the latitudinarian Dr Proudie, who "bore with the idolatry of Rome, tolerated even the infidelity of Socinianism, and was hand-in-glove with the Presbyterian Synods of Scotland," married to a lady who observed "a perfect abstinence from any cheering employment on the Sabbath." The Victorian Sunday was a very terrible thing. Molesworth braved a formidable public opinion by opening Kew Gardens on Sunday. But Shaftesbury was the unappeasable arch-tyrant of Sabbatarianism. "As Chairman of the Lord's Day Observance Society, and the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association," write Mr and Mrs Hammond,[20] "he worked incessantly to keep the Sunday face in England." In *Punch* may be found two curious cartoons, which are pendants to one another though separated in time by

thirty-one years. The first (1850, vol. xix., p. 5) shows Shaftesbury in company with a Puritan, who remarks, "Verily, brother Ashley—between you and me and the POST—we have made a nice mess of it," and refers to the suppression of Sunday posts [21]; in the second (5th March 1882) he is with the Duke of Argyll and Lord Cairns, to whom he says: "The dear Archbishop was quite right when he said that Battersea Park on a wet Sunday afternoon was far more enjoyable than the British Museum." The trio are walking under bare trees in a snowstorm; the Scottish Duke wishes that he could get "a drop of whuskey." All these restrictive activities were inspired by Exeter Hall, where Evangelical Churchmen forgathered with Nonconformists. Of the former, *Punch* (1852, vol. xxii., p. 206) presents an extreme type in the Reverend Ichabod Blare, the proprietor of a private chapel, "so furiously Claphamite, that his conscience forbade him to go to the May Meetings, because Exeter Hall bore the name of Dr Phillpott's diocese." But though the Church contained this almost dissenting element, the strife between her and Nonconformity grew more and more bitter, for it was exacerbated by political passion. John Bright stigmatized the Protestant Church of Ireland as "that foul blot," and denounced the Church of England as "that overgrown and monstrous abuse. . . . With 14,000 Dissenting Chapels in England and Wales, with two-thirds of Scotland in dissenting ranks, with five-sixths of Ireland hostile to the Church, how comes it that this scandalous abuse puts on the character of a national and useful institution?" Matthew Arnold (a clergyman's son) was equally outspoken on Dissent. Nonconformists are "incomplete and mutilated men." "They entered the prison of Puritanism and had the key turned on their spirit there for 200 years." He exhausts his sarcasm on Miall's paper, *The Nonconformist*, and its motto: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion."

The current in the new channels of expression, which Reform opened up to middle-class opinion in both Press and platform, ran strongly against Roman Catholicism—

or "Popery," as the ancient Faith was more often termed. *Punch*, though himself often guilty of anti-Roman ferocity, could castigate the violence of this campaign. In vol. xvi., p. 206 (1849), we find a very diverting drawing, "A Prospect of Exeter Hall, Showinge a Christian Gentleman Denouncynge ye Pope," and the picture is elucidated by "Mr Pips his Diary." One orator "did storm like a Madman against the Maynooth Grant to the Pope of Rome; and howled as fierce as a Hyæna. The other, a Clergyman too, and looked as much like one, with his sneering angry Visage, and did vehemently harangue, crying bitterly out on some of my Lords and the Members of the Commons that had voted for Popish Endowment. . . . The two chief Speeches lasted an Hour and a Half each, and the Chairman leaving his seat, I away, my Head aching thro' the Raving." On 24th September 1850 the Pope issued his Brief "Under the Seal of the Fisherman," dividing England into dioceses; on 7th October Cardinal Wiseman, promoted from Bishop of Melipotamus *in partibus Infidelium* to Archbishop of Westminster, published his Pastoral, "given out of the Flaminian Gate of Rome." There was a furious outburst; but it was as much a national as a religious protest. "I hate the Pope," exclaimed Harcourt (in 1851), "as Nelson did a Frenchman, like the Devil." Palmerston, a moderate man in religious matters,[22] wrote, "What has goaded the nation is the manner, insolent and ostentatious, in which it has been done"; the Pope had represented England "as a land of benighted heathens." The Ecclesiastical Titles Act was passed, but never enforced. Sixteen years later, when the Bill repealing this Act was being debated, *Punch* wrote a rhymed protest, "Shall we rub 'No Popery!' off the door?" one verse of which explains why the Pope's action so deeply offended the nation:

"That England's Church owns England's law,
Knows no head but the Queen,
But from the State draws power and weight,
And on the State must lean."

Punch's reasons for retaining the Act are expressed in vigorous metaphor :

> " Since then, up-hung, the Act has swung
> The deadest of dead letters :
> But footpads may a warning read
> E'en from a corpse in fetters."

And :

> " Dogs in their sleep their grinders keep,
> Tho' their lips are closed o'er 'em ;
> And a rod is not less a rod,
> That's hung up *in terrorem*."

In the same year Mr Murphy's lectures against Roman Catholicism caused Anti-Popery riots at Birmingham. " Mr Murphy lectures at Birmingham," wrote Matthew Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy*, " and showers on the Catholic population of that town ' words ' (says the Home Secretary) ' only fit to be addressed to thieves and murderers.' " A Dissenting minister connected with Mr Murphy's campaign, " speaking in the midst of an irritated population of Catholics, exclaimed : ' I say, then, away with the Mass ! It is from the bottomless pit ; and in the bottomless pit shall all liars have their part, and in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' And again : ' When all the praties were black in Ireland, why didn't the priests say the hocus-pocus over them, and make them all good again ? ' He shared, too, Mr Murphy's fears of some invasion of his domestic happiness : ' What I wish to say to you as Protestant husbands is, *Take care of your wives !* ' " John Bright levelled a characteristic insult against the Catholic gentry of Ireland —" that religion to which they profess to be so much devoted." Some of us are old enough to remember hearing in our childhood very lurid sermons, which suggested that the Marian persecutions were about to be revived. Disraeli said that the Buckinghamshire peasants thought they were going to be burned alive, and " taken up to Smithfield instead of their pigs."

The Church of England herself has, for the last two hundred years at least, contained the three parties of High, Low and Broad ; it is vital to her that all three remain within her fold. The wise Lord Salisbury, speaking in the House of Lords on the Clergy Discipline Bill in May 1874, described them as the Sacramental, the Emotional and the Philosophic Schools, and " it is upon the frank and loyal tolerance of these Schools that the existence of the Establishment depends." But the Early Victorians were too much in earnest about religion to be tolerant ; Low Churchmen persecuted High, High and Low joined forces to persecute Broad. Violent were the attacks on the Puseyites, increasing in violence when Newman seceded in 1845, and in 1850 when Manning seceded and the Pope issued his Brief. In 1851 the King of Hanover hears from a friend that Gladstone is " a red-hot Puseyite " ; in 1856 Graham tells Greville that his (Gladstone's) religious opinions are " abhorrent to the majority of this Protestant country . . . and approach very nearly to Rome." *Punch* kept up a constant fire on the Puseyites ; a typically outrageous cartoon was entitled " Religion à la Mode " (26th June 1858), and shows John Bull about to horsewhip a priest to whom a lady of fashion is making her confession. The accompanying verses are headed, " The Puseyite's Invitation to the Confessional " :

" Will you answer all my questions, however strange they seem ?
And if some of them should shock you, will you promise not to scream ?
All your sins will you reveal, and your every fault express ?
Will you, madam, will you, won't you come and confess ?"

Shaftesbury thundered against the Ritualists : " I had rather worship with Lydia on the bank, ' by the river side,' than with a hundred surpliced priests in the temple of St Barnabas." He described the service at St Albans, Holborn, as " the worship of Jupiter and Juno." " Do we thus lead souls to Christ or to Baal ? " he asked.[23] At Court the

Ritualists were in evil odour. In 1845 the Queen wrote to Peel to find "a person decidedly averse to Puseyism" to fill a stall at Windsor. The Prince Consort recommended Aberdeen (1853) to show them "marked disfavour." In 1866 the Queen wrote a strong letter to Dean Wellesley in condemnation of Archbishop Longley's alleged Anglicizing in Scotland. In 1874 Disraeli wanted to make Lord Beauchamp Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. "But the Queen was horrorstruck," wrote Lord Salisbury to Lady Salisbury. "'Do you know that Lord Beauchamp is a Ritualist?' . . . The upshot is that Lord Beauchamp is to be put off with the Lord Stewardship." Both from Beauchamp and Bath (whom Disraeli wanted to be Lord Chamberlain) the Queen asked for an assurance that neither would identify himself publicly with the extreme High Church party.

Furious also were the attacks on Broad Churchmen, and a great stumbling-block to "non-theological" minds. Greville wrote of the Hampden controversy (7th January 1848): "There must be some dispassionate men who will be disgusted and provoked with the whole thing, and at the ferocity with which these holy disputants assault and vituperate each other about that which none of them understand. . . . It is cant, hypocrisy, and fanaticism from beginning to end." "To have read Lessing and Schleiermacher and studied Hegel," writes the biographer of Jowett, "was enough to compromise a clerical reputation in the early 'fifties.'" In 1853 Maurice was deprived of his professorship at King's College for teaching that the doctrine of Eternal Punishment did not necessarily follow from the Thirty-Nine Articles; Gladstone, to his honour, exerted himself to protect him. In 1854 Palmerston got into serious trouble for telling the school children of Romsey that "all children were born good," and thereby impugning the doctrine of Original Sin. In 1863 Colenso was deposed from his bishopric and excommunicated for having written that there was much in the Pentateuch that was not historical.[24] Bishop Lee of Manchester, at a meeting of the Bible Society, spoke of Colenso "as assailing the five

Books of Moses by misrepresentations the most unpardonable, by distortions of the truth the most monstrous, and with a savage glee and exultation which would rather become a successful fiend in an attempt on what was good than a Minister of a Christian congregation." About the same time was begun the campaign against Jowett. Jowett found a sturdy champion in Mr Punch, who wrote verses in ridicule of his persecutors. On 7th March 1863 he printed "De Hæretico Comburendo":

> "O for a holocaust of heretics,
> With Jowett in one common ban to mix,
> For leave to burn, hang, quarter, disembowel,
> Maurice and Williams, Temple, Wilson, Powell."

And on 19th March 1864, "*In re* Jowett":

> "What! pay a salary to JOWETT?
> Blow it!
> That heretic—arch-heretic, indeed—
> One of those rogues who recommends his creed
> By honest work and modest learning! . . .
>
> Let undergraduates cheer him from the gallery,
> But of two evils we will choose the lesser,
> And if we *have* a heretic professor,
> We'll do our best to chouse him of his salary—
> And, whatso statute gives fair play to JOWETT,
> Out we will throw it!"

In this year *Essays and Reviews* were synodically condemned; they were condemned also by Disraeli, who described them as "at the best a second-hand medley of contradictory and discordant theories." "Free enquiry," said Disraeli, who about this time was attending Diocesan Conferences, "should be pursued by free enquirers." "No Dogma, no Dean" was another utterance of this champion of orthodoxy. In 1866 Shaftesbury stigmatized Seeley's *Ecce Homo* as "the most pestilential book ever vomited

from the jaws of Hell." But in 1869 the appointment of Temple to the bishopric of Exeter occasioned a strange temporary alliance. Shaftesbury was chairman and Pusey vice-chairman of a Committee of Protest; and some of Shaftesbury's Evangelical friends were gravely offended by this conjunction. Temple might well have exclaimed, like Queen Margaret:

> "What! were ye snarling all, before I came,
> Ready to catch each other by the throat,
> And turn ye all your hatred now on me?"

But Jowett found another stout defender in Queen Victoria, to whom Palmerston had recommended him for his Greek Professorship in 1855. She said that Oxford had treated him "shamefully." The religious opinion of the Court was of a moderation that contrasted favourably with the violence exhibited in other quarters. The Queen's anti-Puseyite bias was excusable; from tradition and policy she cherished "the Protestant feeling that should always actuate our family." She described herself to Gladstone in 1874 as "Protestant to the very heart's core," but both she and the Prince disliked the heresy-hunters. "The Bishops behave extremely ill about Dr Hampden," she writes to Lord John Russell (December 1847), "and the Bishop of Exeter is gone so far, in the Queen's opinion, that he might be prosecuted for it, in calling the Act settling the Supremacy upon the Crown a *fatal act* and the *Magna Charta of Tyranny*." With regard to this controversy the Prince approved of Johnson's saying: "A dogmatist is not far from a bigot, and runs great danger to become a bloody persecutor." No doubt it was this anti-Erastianism of Phillpotts that made the Queen clap her hands when he was defeated over the Gorham judgment. In 1859 she made Kingsley her chaplain. The theology of the Victorian Court was broad, like that of George the Second's Court in the lifetime of Queen Caroline. "Refute and don't condemn," was the Prince Consort's sensible injunction to the fierce assailers of *Essays and Reviews*. Stockmar's views

also were broad. He advised that the Prince of Wales must unquestionably be trained in the creed of the Church of England, but he gave his support to those who regard "the pure and comprehensive morality of Christianity" as more important than its "supernatural portions." For appointments in the Church the Queen's policy was "to choose those who were of moderate opinions—not leaning too much to either side. Extreme opinions lead to mischief in the end, and produce much discord in the Church, which it would be advisable to avoid."

Stockmar's *Memorandum* on the education of the Prince of Wales proves how seriously religion was regarded at Court, which, with the Prince as its centre, was the headquarters of the seriousness of the country. Education and politics and religion all felt this influence. And if, in the preceding pages, the darker side of religion has been dwelt upon—its hardness, narrowness, sectionalism and tendency to persecute, these are only proofs of how intensely religious men then were. Stiggins and Chadband are caricatures,[25] but caricatures of what? Of Puritan ministers of religion who fail to live up to the Puritan ideal of holiness and self-denial. Like the teachers of morality in *Rasselas*, "they discourse like angels, but they live like men." Chadband discoursed quite angelically, but he was overfond of the pleasures of the table, besides being a would-be blackmailer. The character of Stiggins, created by the genius of Dickens, has by itself done a great deal to fasten on these religionists the reputation of hypocrisy—an hypocrisy similarly imputed to the Puritans of 1640-1660—and of insincerity, that alleged great vice of the Early Victorians.

But for the charge of insincerity there is surely more ground in their politics. For in religion a man may believe what he professes, and yet fall short in conduct. The politician of a "democratic" age is more apt to profess what he does not even believe. "Under the old system," said Macaulay at Leeds, soon after Reform was passed, "I have never been the flatterer of the great. Under the new system

I will not be the flatterer of the people." He made the proud claim that

> " Nec civium ardor prava jubentium
> Nec vultus instantis tyranni "

could deflect him from political virtue. And he had some justification for making it. He adopted (says his nephew and biographer), in the contest at Leeds, " an attitude of high and almost peremptory independence." But what shall we say of Durham's speech at Newcastle (19th November 1834) : " I know that there is as much sound sense, true honour and real independence to be found under the coarse working-jacket of the mechanic as beneath the ermine robe of the peer " ? The converse, at any rate, is equally true :

> " Hearts just as pure and fair
> May beat in Belgrave Square
> As in the lowly air
> Of Seven Dials."

Or what of John Bright's " millions of intelligent and honest men " ? Are men who are both intelligent and honest, as a matter of fact, to be counted by the million ? It is fatally tempting to say so, if the orator wants his hearers to vote on his side. From Bright, too, we get that facile "sobstuff," with its underlying assumption that the suffering masses are morally superior :

" There is not a man who labours and sweats for his daily bread,[26] there is not a woman living in a cottage who strives to make her home happy for husband and children, to whom the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer have not brought hope."

He who " labours and sweats " is very responsive to this oratory. Did not Rogue Riderhood claim to be " a labouring man who moistens every crust of bread he earns with his tears " ? Is a man really better and wiser if he is poor and ignorant ? If not, what is the case for democracy ? Bright did face the question. The vote, he argued, must be given to the poor, in order that justice may be done to them by

the State ; otherwise, the House of Commons " does not represent the intelligence and justice of the nation."

Harcourt, in 1868, gave a more halting explanation, which seemed scarcely to satisfy himself :

" The whole theory of popular government rests, I imagine, on the belief that large bodies of men (of whom, of course, the mass are imperfectly educated) do, from a personal apprehension of what is for the individual interest of each, come to a wiser and safer conclusion as to what is for the benefit of all than is likely to be reached by the most highly educated and enlightened rulers on their behalf."

He must, however, have thought there were limits to this collective wisdom, for in 1883 he decided that " a popular body was altogether unfit to conduct such a machinery " as the police. The mass-meetings, where the applause of thousands of the " intelligent and honest " ones reacted on the orator, were not conducive to sincerity of thought or word. Our return to " the Law," wrote Carlyle, will not be " by smooth flowery paths, it is like, and with ' tremendous cheers ' in our throats." *Punch*, in *The Dream of John Bright* (8th January 1859), an ingenious parody of *The Dream of Eugene Aram*, describes the Tribune of the People's vision of how he demolished Parliament :

" Two monster meetings at Birmingham,
At Manchester but one ;
A talk at Glasgow and Edinburgh
And then the deed was done ;
There lay the old Parliament defunct,
And I was the great gun ! "

Gladstone's sleep was affected by these experiences : " Somewhat haunted by dreams of halls, and lines of people, and great assemblies " (14th October 1864). The Press, too, was beginning to work by mass-suggestion : " The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, the newspaper with the largest circulation in the whole world, is *The Daily Telegraph* ! " [27]

It was now becoming a commonplace of Liberal-political thought that all things were on the up-grade. "The last fifty years," wrote Harcourt to *The Times* in 1866, "have probably witnessed the greatest moral, social and political progress which this nation has ever achieved." "I come into South Lancashire," said Gladstone (July 1865), fresh from his defeat at Oxford,[28] "and find here around me different phenomena. I find the development of industry. I find the growth of enterprise. I find the progress of social philanthropy. I find the prevalence of toleration. I find an ardent desire for freedom." As Mr Sam Weller would have said, "it was all wery capital." It is not surprising that his hearers showed "unbounded enthusiasm," heartily endorsing the speaker's argument that they were superior to Oxonians. There was "another meeting of 5000 at the Amphitheatre [Liverpool], if possible more enthusiastic than that at Manchester." Three years later he found it easy to ridicule those who were pessimists about the Constitution:

"In a vein of pleasant mockery, on the accusation that he was going to ruin and destroy the Constitution, he reminded them that within his own recollection it had been wholly ruined and destroyed eight times: in 1828 by the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts; in 1829 by admitting Roman Catholics to parliament; in 1832 by reform; in 1846 by Free Trade; in 1849 by repeal of the navigation law; in 1858 when Jews were allowed to sit in parliament; in 1866 when the government of Lord Russell had the incredible audacity to propose a reform bill with the intention of carrying it or falling in the attempt."[29]

Our "ruined" Constitution was indeed externally as prosperous as the "Ruined Maid" of Mr Thomas Hardy's poem:

"'And whence such fair garments, such prosperi-ty?'
'O, didn't you know I'd been ruined?' said she."

But this maid, for all her fine clothes and "prosperi-ty" *was* ruined; nor is prosperity a complete test of a nation's well-being. Carlyle said of Gladstone in 1867: "But now he has been declaiming that England is such a wonderfully

prosperous state, meaning that it has plenty of money in its breeches pocket . . . but that's not the prosperity we want." Lord Morley in his old age instanced many striking achievements of the Early Victorian era—Public Health, Education, the Factory Acts, Free Trade, the Suffrage, the Co-operative Movement, the Friendly Societies; and of many of these things Victorians might well be proud. But the men of our own age, who find the leaders of the democratic Labour Party the frequent apologists of Bolshevism, are profoundly sceptical about democratic "Progress."

And even in the "sixties" there were bold spirits who refused to prophesy smooth things. John Stuart Mill had the courage to say that working men were "generally liars." Lowe asked whether "venality, ignorance, drunkenness" were not found "at the bottom" rather than at "the top." Lord Salisbury, with caustic candour, remarked that "in the collective deliberations of any body of men, reason gains the mastery over passion exactly in proportion as they are educated and as they are few. Passion is fostered equally by the two main characteristics of the democratic sovereign—ignorance and numbers." And he prophesied with strange prescience that a time would come when "the rich would pay all the taxes and the poor make all the laws"; when the candidate for power "will seek it for the pay and the journey-money, for the good things that come from 'lobbying' and for that which sticks to the hands of those that handle contracts." More than twenty years later, the poet who is always associated with the illusions of the Victorians, expressed his own disillusionment as to "Progress":

"Gone the cry of 'Forward, Forward,' lost within a growing gloom."

And:

"There among the glooming alleys Progress halts on palsied feet,
Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the street."

No doubt the Early Victorians were very much in earnest, both as to religion and politics. The age of Tennyson has been described as "an age of real spiritual agony." To men of a more sceptical age this seriousness becomes suspect; they fix their attention on the reverse side of it—the narrowness, hypocrisy, insincerity; especially if they have a satirical turn. It was the era of the middle classes; and, whatever their virtues and failings, their reign was short. "And where," asks Matthew Arnold, "is this great force of Philistinism now? It is thrust into the second rank, it is become a power of yesterday, it has lost the future." "A new power has suddenly appeared, a power which it is impossible yet to judge fully, but which is certainly a wholly different force from middle-class Liberalism." In England monarchical rule, qualified by baronial power and ecclesiastical influence and peasants' rebellions, endured for centuries; aristocratic rule for a century and a half; middle-class rule (or influence) for little more than one generation. The middle-class power never firmly established itself. Greville once wrote in his Journal of the "formidable" middle classes, but this epithet was never applicable. Some of them were ennobled. Some became absorbed in the upper class, which appropriated their wealth (as it had appropriated the wealth of the Nabobs), and made use of their abilities.

Jowett wrote to Lingen in 1846: "You seem to imagine this Oligarchy a much more narrow thing than it really is. It cannot do without wealth—it is liable to become a jest: —it cannot do without education, for then it is robbed of more than half its associations. And in this way the plutocracy and the aristocracy of talent, the latter partly through the professions, are ever blending with it."

We find a new class appearing—Matthew Arnold's "charming" and "delightful" people, the cultured *haute bourgeoise* of Du Maurier's Hampstead and Kensington salons. And Bagehot (1867) notes the arrival of "the class of highly cultivated men of business who, after a few years, are able to leave business and begin ambition. As yet these

men are few in public life, because they do not know their own strength." This is "the class with much the same education and notions as the aristocracy" (Matthew Arnold to W. E. Forster, 30th September 1865): it scarcely existed in 1832.

The earlier political leaders of the middle classes, Russell, Palmerston and Derby, were aristocrats; by death or retirement these three disappeared from public life at about the same time. Their later leaders, Disraeli, Gladstone and Bright, delivered them over to democracy. Lowe remained faithful:

"The seven Houses of Commons that have sate since the Reform Bill have performed exploits unrivalled, not merely in the six centuries during which Parliament has existed, but in the whole history of representative assemblies." But the lower class was always jealous and mistrustful of them.

And the aristocrats were still strong, and contemptuous. Froude wrote of *Lothair*, which portrays English society about the years 1866-1868, that it exhibited "patrician Society in England flourishing in its fullest bloom, but like a flower, opening fully only to fade." Patrician *hauteur*[30] was undiminished, and trade was still disdained. The Duke of Cleveland, when Lord Rosebery married a Rothschild, affected to have heard of the family as respectable and "something in the City." To *Punch's* young "swell" in his club, Temple Bar was still "the pwincipal Barwier between us and the horwid City." Land was still essential to a social position. It is true that *Punch* (27th May 1865) quotes from *The Morning Post*:

"How many of the ancient parks and baronial halls have passed from their old and much-encumbered proprietors into the hands of cotton-spinners, cotton-brokers, brewers, iron-masters, and engineers, overflowing with ready cash, and boasting gigantic balances at their bankers!"

And he is sarcastic about these new proprietors. But the old county families were still dominant. Lord Willoughby de Broke gives us a list of those who formed the "Club"

PEGASUS UNHARNESSED

In 1865 Gladstone lost his seat for [Oxford] University & was returned for S. Lancashire. Lord Morley refers to this as his "emancipation from fetters." Tenniel, the cartoonist, has here associated the University of 1865 with Bigotry, Oaths, Tests & Protection Duties.

(*See p.* 253)

in Warwickshire in the early "seventies," which recalls Disraeli's *καταλόγοι*:

"Mr Shirley of Eastington, Lord Willoughby de Broke of Compton Verney, Mr Granville of Willesbourne, the Reverend John Lucy of Hampton Lucy, Lord Redesdale of Balsford, Lord Leigh of Stoneleigh Abbey, Mr Little of Newbold Pacey, Mr Darwin Galston of Edstone Hall, Sir Francis Goodriche of Studley Castle, Colonel North of Wroxton Abbey, Lord Villiers of Upton House, and Mr Holland Corbett of Admington."

The smaller squires could still live on their rents: "At Allington, Dale of Allington had always been known as a king." He was "the owner of some three thousand a year, all of which proceeded from the lands of that parish." [31]

In 1866 and 1867 the end of all things was once more forecasted. Lord Cranborne (afterwards Lord Salisbury) had long "entertained a firm conviction that we were going to the dogs" (February 1867). Lowe asserted that the new voters would repudiate the National Debt and adopt an inconvertible paper currency. Disraeli, attacking the Bill of 1866, prophesied "the rule of mobs in great towns and the sway of turbulent multitudes," and that "the great elements of our civilization would disappear and England from a first-rate kingdom would become a third-rate republic." Next year he himself carried a Reform Bill, and Coventry Patmore denounced 1867 as

"The year of that great crime,
When the false English nobles and their Jew,
By God demented, slew
The trust they stood twice pledged to keep from wrong."

Carlyle (1866) thought that "the tug of revolution struggle may be even *near* for poor England," and quoted a certain "shining Countess," who had said, "Niagara or what you will, we will at least have our villa on the Mediterranean when Church and State are gone." It was easy for

a "progressive" politician like Gladstone to enumerate how often the Constitution had been "ruined" and "the floodgates" opened, and to maintain that the flood had beneficially irrigated the thirsty institutions of the country. The "ruin" which was foretold did not take place. The addition of a million voters to the electorate was for a time beneficial to the middle-class Liberals, just as the immediate effect of the Act of 1832 had benefited the Whigs. Republicanism, it is true, was preached by some middle-class leaders, including Dilke and Chamberlain, but this movement was never dangerous. In the early "eighties" Chamberlain was inciting to a sort of revolution; the lords were "the drones in the hive," the working men "drive the drones from the hive (*Loud cheers*) and the drones perish miserably from the violent pressure of their indignant fellow-subjects"; but Chamberlain never attained to the imagery or invective of Mr Lloyd George, and a few years later was priding himself on being associated with "the gentlemen of England,"

"Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit."

As a counter-influence to democracy and republicanism, the cause of Imperialism, to which Chamberlain devoted his later years, grew stronger and stronger. The Queen became a being of mystery; the severe "Missus" of Clarendon was transformed into the romantic "Faery" of Disraeli. During nearly the whole of the two decades which followed the Reform and Redistribution of 1884 the Conservatives were in power. But now the working classes have political leaders drawn from their own ranks, and no one may foretell the course of Democracy—whether it is to lead to revolution, or whether (as Sidonia argued) "the tendency of advanced civilization is in truth to pure Monarchy."

These things lie on the knees of the gods. The question that Montacute asked his father, as to whither the "transition" was leading, is still one that "the wisest cannot answer." But the time of transition itself, this

short period of five-and-thirty years, was certainly marked by extraordinary changes, the quickness of which we may realize if we compare the difference between 1832 and 1867, in the social and political world, with the difference between 1732 and 1767, or indeed between the beginning and end of any thirty-five years in English history. It is a period which included things so diverse as the duel and the opening of the Metropolitan Railway (known originally as "The Drain"); which knew such contrasts in hotels as "The Saracen's Head" on Snow Hill (the house of call of Mr Squeers) and "The Langham" in Regent Street; which saw the end of Vauxhall (in which Pepys delighted), and the beginning of the Zoo and the Crystal Palace; which extended from Mr Tony Weller to the uniformed railway guard; in which the *Punch* of Mark Lemon and Douglas Jerrold developed into the *Punch* of Tenniel and Burnand; in which "Dandies" changed to "Swells," and pigtails and top-boots and tasselled canes gave way to top-hats and frock-coats and Dundreary whiskers. It saw, also, many survivals of a more barbarous age. Debtors were still immured in prisons; cock-fighting could still be seen in the East End of London; soldiers and sailors were still flogged; executions took place outside Newgate, and people hired rooms from the windows of which the horrid sight could be seen. In 1864 five sailors were hanged there by Calcraft. "The fall then given was short," writes Mr A. R. Bennett, "necks were seldom dislocated, and strangulation was the usual result."[32] Mr Punch, in his youthful optimism (1846, vol. x., p. 33), declared that "the gallows is doomed," but executions *in public* continued till 1868. The householders of the Old Bailey reaped a rich harvest: "Do you want a room, Sir? A fine view of the scene, Sir. You can have every accommodation and plenty of refreshment already provided; a good fire, Sir, so that you will not feel the cold." Thus, said *Punch*, they solicited the passers-by. There are people still living who have seen these things.

Some things also survived that were picturesque; and

there were many curious customs peculiar to the period which have now also vanished, but which old men can also remember. Bishops wore wigs. The Lord Mayor's Procession went by water until the mayoralty of Thomas Finnis in 1856. Ladies sat in their carriages eating ices opposite Gunter's in Berkeley Square. Men rode to business in the City, rode out from London to hunt in Surrey, rode home to the Albany from hunting with the Queen's. They wore smoking-caps in deference to the susceptible noses of ladies, mourning-studs after bereavements, and swallow-tail coats in the morning.[33] On entering church, some—instead of kneeling—stood up and prayed into their hats. At funerals a pair of mutes were stationed at the door of the house, and Early Victorian mourners wore short cloaks.

Life became immensely safer and easier. After the "fifties" it was not incumbent on gentlemen to fight duels. Except for the Crimean campaign the Early Victorians were practically untroubled by war. The hardships of coach travel had no longer to be endured. But the introduction of chloroform was their greatest boon. "Wonderful as are the powers and the feats of the steam-engine and the electric telegraph," writes Greville (24th December 1847), "the chloroform far transcends them all in its beneficent and consolatory operations." Lord Willoughby de Broke (in *The Passing Years*) says it was "some compensation for the loss of the pocket-boroughs." That the general amenities of life in both town and country had been enormously increased may be seen at once by comparing the realism of Frith's pictures—*Ramsgate Sands* (1853), *Derby Day* (1858), and *The Railway Station* (*Paddington*) (1862)—with the realism of Hogarth's, or with Rowlandson's scenes of caricature.

But if life was safer, it was in many ways duller. The railways diverted much human and equine traffic from the roads. There was more sobriety, but less conviviality and good-fellowship. Disraeli, writing (in *Endymion*) of the "thirties," after remarking that the new clubs were superseding the old coffee-houses, adds: "their influence had not

touched the chop-houses, and it required another quarter of a century before their cheerful and hospitable roofs and the old taverns of London " made way for clubs still newer.[34] In 1864 the death of Leech was the end of an era of *Punch*. Du Maurier took the vacant chair at The Table; the artist of the drawing-room succeeded the artist of the hunting-field. Rough-and-tumble everywhere yielded to regularity and order; broad humour to sophisticated wit. Even the genius of Dickens reacted to the age. " The London of *Our Mutual Friend*," it has been observed, " is grimmer and drabber than the London of *Pickwick*."

In the externals of life there was, it is true, an increasing grimness and drabness. There was propriety and there was decorum, the outward visible signs of a spirit of seriousness. There was a very strict Court, which by the end of the " forties " had succeeded in imposing " a feminine code of morals " upon English Society.[35] There was religion, and religiosity, and the conflict of creeds, and the struggle between Reason and Faith by which so many minds became

" mazed with doubts and sick with fears."

And there were powerful influences which seemed bent on restricting the natural robust happiness of Englishmen. But this sad spirit was not the normal spirit of the nation; it was transitional, like the sway of the middle classes which did so much to engender it. The Englishman of enduring type is neither gloomy, nor introspective, nor repressive. He is extremely indifferent to religious controversy; if he tries to philosophize, " cheerfulness is always breaking in." [36] He never for long desponds. And who was, after all, the most representative national personage of this era? Not Prince Albert, the man of German culture and ideals; nor Shaftesbury, the Puritan; nor Gladstone, " the Jesuit "; nor the eloquent and supple Wilberforce; nor the inscrutable Disraeli; nor Carlyle, the ingeminator of woe; nor Tennyson, torn between " honest doubt " and belief; nor Matthew Arnold of the Hebraizing soul and the Hellenizing mind. Queen Victoria

—warlike, sensible, industrious, straightforward—was of a truer English type than any of these great men. But Palmerston is the man we think of as the protagonist of England in these changeful and pregnant years; a most laborious statesman, but also a man of the world; at home in Society and on the Turf; of undaunted courage and inexhaustible vitality, and (it may be admitted),

"touched with no ascetic gloom."

When he was seventy-six he rode down to Harrow on horseback in the pouring rain and was received by the boys "with great enthusiasm," and he spent many hours the same night in the House of Commons; and again, in his eightieth year, "he timed himself to trot from Piccadilly to the Head Master's door, nearly twelve miles, within the hour, and accomplished it." He was the Mark Tapley of statesmen, who, as Clarendon said, "had a jolly way of looking at disaster." And, in contrast with the pessimists and detractors, of whom this period was too prolific, his biographer justly claimed for him a crowning merit: "He believed in England as the best and greatest country in the world."

NOTES

[1] In a recent study of George Eliot we read: "The really serious-minded, of whom there were so many, looked to her for their gospel" (*George Eliot and her Times* (Elizabeth S. Haldane), p. 5). "One wonders whether life was ever such a solemn and earnest thing as in the 50's, 60's and 70's, and whether conscience was ever so acutely sensitive since the days of the Puritan fathers" (*ib.*, p. 8).

[2] "Helen was not inveigled into leaving Sparta, but carried off by force; . . . the crime of adultery was committed after, and not before, her abduction" (*Homeric Studies*, iii., p. 194). Gladstone examines her character at length (*ib.*, pp. 571-585). Euripides put forward a simpler defence—viz. that only her *wraith* went with Paris to Troy, the real Helen having been carried by the gods to Egypt.

[3] Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i., p. 28.

[4] See *Eminent Victorians* (*Dr Arnold*), Mr Lytton Strachey, p. 187.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

[6] "It was noticeable at the Universities and elsewhere that

Arnold's pupils were sometimes characterized by self-consciousness and by premature seriousness, and the fact did not always add to the popularity of Rugby boys" (Sir J. Fitch, Preface to Teacher's Edition of Stanley's *Arnold*, 1901).

[7] *Christian Socialism*, (C. E. Raven), pp. 94, 95.

[8] Arnold, it may be mentioned, considered that the profession of an advocate, "according to the common practice of the Bar," could not be a pure and Christian calling.

[9] Of Percival's first address to his Sixth Form at Clifton a distinguished pupil (Sir Herbert Warren) has written: "I was to some extent prepared for it by my early reading of *Tom Brown*."

[10] In *Fraser's Magazine* (1860).

[11] He was Chairman of the Lunacy Commissioners for fifty-one years.

[12] This lady, who drank gin from a teapot till her nose showed symptoms of inflammation, was "recommended from Bartholomew's."

[13] See *Lord Shaftesbury* (J. L. and Barbara Hammond), pp. 169-170.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 276.

[15] *Lothair*, chap. i.

[16] *Barchester Towers*, chap. xvii.

[17] *Ask Mamma*, chap. xv.

[18] See *Martin Chuzzlewit*, chap. ix.

[19] In 1865 Trollope wrote an article on May Meetings for *The Pall Mall Gazette*: "You sit for four hours and listen to six sermons" (*Trollope, a Commentary* (Michael Sadleir), p. 250).

[20] *Lord Shaftesbury*, p. 239.

[21] The Duke of Wellington wrote to Lady Salisbury (8th July 1850): "We are living under the Post Office Regulations of the Saints" (*A Great Man's Friendship* (Lady Burghclere), p. 49).

[22] He regretted the words "insolent" and "mummery" in Lord John Russell's famous letter.

[23] *Lord Shaftesbury* (J. L. and Barbara Hammond), p. 247.

[24] On appeal, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council pronounced all these proceedings null and void.

[25] Miss E. S. Haldane (*George Eliot and her Times*, p. 233) says that "neither of them ever had a prototype, entertaining as they are." But there can be no caricature without some sort of original.

[26] John Morley was capable of the same sentimental appeal: "For my part I would rather be an artisan, drawing my 25s. a week, that I had honestly earned by the sweat of my brow, than I would be one of those Irish absentee landlords, squandering thousands of pounds that had been wrung from their rack-rented tenants" (Speech at Blackburn, 1867).

[27] *Culture and Anarchy*, chap. i. (1869).

[28] Palmerston said of Gladstone: "He is a dangerous man; keep

him in Oxford and he is partially muzzled, but send him elsewhere and he will run wild" (*Palmerston* (Philip Guedalla) p. 453). Lord Clarendon told Lady Salisbury that Palmerston regarded Gladstone as "combining all the elements calculated to produce a most dangerous character for the country" (*A Great Man's Friendship* (Lady Burghclere), p. 33).

[29] Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii., p. 251.

[30] A strange survival of feudal haughtiness was (November 1925) exhibited in the Duke of Argyll's letter to a Presbyterian Minister: "It will be, therefore, no powerful surprise to you to know that I intend to have religious peace throughout the marches of my Lordship of Cowal." Truly has it been written: "There is no lord so lordly as a Scotch lord."

[31] *The Small House at Allington* (Anthony Trollope), chap. i. (1864).

[32] *London and Londoners in the 1850's and 1860's*, pp. 264-265.

[33] The author saw an old gentleman thus dressed as late as 1896. Benjamin Jowett (*d.* 1893) and Gladstone (*d.* 1898) adhered to this fashion.

[34] Croker wrote in 1823, in reference to the founding of the Athenæum: "The University Club, the Travellers, The United Services, and other such clubs, had superseded the old coffee-houses."

[35] *Trollope, a Commentary* (Michael Sadleir), p. 17. Mr Sadleir refers to the burden laid on the Mid-Victorian "by the eminent and learned folk who governed him, and by the high-principled women who ruled his private life." (*Ibid.*, p. 22).

[36] Miss Haldane, in her study of George Eliot, does well to remind us: "Of course there was a happy, jolly life going on in England in the earlier part of last century, which paid no account of these problems of existence" (*George Eliot and her Times*, p. 293).

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CHRONOLOGY

1830

Feb. 11. Government rejects Bill to transfer the Franchise of East Retford to Birmingham.
June 30. Death of George the Fourth.
July and August. General Election.
July 27. Revolution in France.
Sept. 15. Huskisson killed at the opening of the Manchester & Liverpool Railway.
Nov. 15. Defeat of Government.
Nov. 17. Wellington resigns ; Grey and the Whigs take office.
Nov. 22. Brougham takes his seat on the Woolsack.
Dec. 26. Independence of Belgium acknowledged by the Allied Powers.

1831

Mar. 1. Lord John Russell introduces Reform Bill in House of Commons.
Mar. 22. Second Reading carried by 302 to 301.
Apr. 18. Defeat of the Ministry. General Election.
June 24. Lord John Russell introduces second Reform Bill.
July 6. Second Reading carried by 367 to 231.
July 19. Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg accepts the crown of Belgium.
Sept. 22. Third Reading of Reform Bill carried by 109.
Oct. 8. House of Lords rejects Bill by 41. Majority includes 21 Bishops.

Oct. 29. Bishop of Bristol's Palace burnt.
Dec. 12. Lord John Russell introduces Bill for third time.

1832

Mar. 23. The third Reform Bill passed in House of Commons by 116.
Apr. 14. The Bill passes Second Reading in House of Lords by 184 to 175.
May 7. Adverse Vote in House of Lords. Resignation of Grey. Ten days of crisis. Country on brink of revolution.
May 17. The King authorizes creation of new Peers.
Return of Grey.
June 7. Reform Bill becomes Law.
General Election.
Disraeli beaten at High Wycombe by Colonel Grey.
Sept. 21. Death of Sir Walter Scott.
Dec. 13. Gladstone returned for Newark.

1833

Sartor Resartus.
Judicial functions of Privy Council transferred to a Committee.
Ten Irish Bishoprics suppressed by Church Temporalities Act.
Mar. 12. Durham resigns.
July 14. Keble's Sermon on National Apostasy.
July 29. Death of Wilberforce.
July. The Factory Act.

1834

The Poor Law Act. Creation of Boards of Guardians.

Hansom takes out patent for his cab.

May. Resignation of Graham and Stanley.

July 8. Resignation of Grey. Melbourne Prime Minister.

July 31. Emancipation of 800,000 slaves.

Nov. Althorp goes to the House of Lords.

The King dismisses Melbourne.

Dec. Peel forms an Administration. Gladstone Under-Secretary for Colonies.

1835

Sketches by Boz.

Jan. Dissolution of Parliament

Apr. 8. Resignation of Peel.

Apr. 18. Melbourne Prime Minister again.

1836

Hampden's Bampton Lectures condemned at Oxford.

Corn Law Association. Grote, Molesworth, Hume, Roebuck.

Jan. 16. Lord Cottenham appointed Lord Chancellor.

Apr. *Pickwick Papers* begin to appear.

Sept. 15. Reduction of Newspaper Duty from 4d. to 1d.

1837

Carlyle's *French Revolution.*

Brougham attacks the Ministry.

June 20. Death of William the Fourth. Accession of Victoria. General Election. Tories gain ground.

July 27. Disraeli elected for Maidstone.

Dec. 7. Disraeli's maiden speech in House of Commons.

1838

Oliver Twist.

Arrest and imprisonment on affidavit of debt of £20 abolished.

June . Macaulay returns from India.

June 28. Coronation of Queen Victoria.

1839

Nicholas Nickleby.

Chartism.

The Lady Flora Hastings imbroglio.

May 10. Melbourne's Ministry resigns. Peel summoned. The "Bedchamber" crisis.

May 12. Melbourne's Ministry returns.

July 25. Gladstone marries Catherine Glynne.

Aug. 28. Disraeli marries Mrs Wyndham Lewis.

Nov. 4. Chartist Riots at Newport. Thomas Phillips, the Mayor, knighted for his brave conduct.

1840

Feb. 10. Marriage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

June 12. Attempt on life of Queen in Green Park.

Sept 12. Duel between Lord Cardigan and Captain Harvey Tuckett.

Oct. 22. Death of Lord Hertford.

Nov. 21. Birth of the Princess Royal.

1841

June. General Election. Tory majority of 80. Disraeli, M.P. for Shrewsbury.
July 17. First number of *Punch*.
Aug. 28. Resignation of Melbourne. Peel Prime Minister. Gladstone Vice-President of the Board of Trade.
Nov. 9. Birth of King Edward VII.

1842

A splendid harvest.
June 12. Death of Dr Arnold.
June 22. Peel's Budget passed with Income Tax.
Aug. 14. Guards sent by railway to Manchester to quell riots. Peel requests arms for Drayton.
Sept. Queen Victoria parts with Baroness Lehzen.

1843

Past and Present.
Handley Cross.
July 1. Duel between Colonel Fawcett and Lieut. Munro.

1844

Coningsby.
Martin Chuzzlewit.
The Factory Act.

1845

Sybil.
Carlyle's *Cromwell.*
Oct. 1. Death of Lord Spencer (formerly Lord Althorp).
Wilberforce made Bishop of Oxford.
Nov. 22. Lord John Russell's Edinburgh letter.
Railroad speculation.
Dec. 6. Resignation of Peel. Russell undertakes to form a Ministry, but fails. Peel returns to office.

1846

Feb. 28. *The Snobs of England* begin to appear in *Punch.*
May 15. Third Reading of Bill repealing Corn Laws carried in House of Commons by 98.
June 26. The Corn Bill passes the Lords. The Coercion Bill defeated in the Commons. Fall of Peel.
July. Lord John Russell Prime Minister.

1847

Vanity Fair.
Tancred.
The Princess.
Ten Hours' Bill becomes Law.
July 23. Parliament dissolved. Whigs gain some strength.
Sept. 15. Fifteen commercial houses stop payment.
Nov. 5. Death of Archbishop Harcourt, *æt.* 90.
Dec. 23. Greville attends an operation by chloroform.
Dec. 28. Hampden elected Bishop of Hereford.

1848

Pendennis.
Dombey and Son.
Jan. Palmerston's circular Dispatch to English representatives in Italy.
Feb. 22. Rioting begins in Paris.
Feb. 24. King Louis-Philippe escapes to England.
Feb. 26. Orleanist Dynasty overthrown.
March, and following months. Revolutions in Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Germany.
Apr. 10. Failure of Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common.

1849

Tory leadership in commission — Herries, Granby, Disraeli.

Mar. 23. Battle of Novara. Restoration of Austrian power in Italy.

May. Fall of Hudson, "The Railway King."

1850

David Copperfield.
Alton Locke.
In Memoriam.
Plain or Ringlets.
The Gorham Judgment.

April 23. Death of Wordsworth. Tennyson Poet Laureate.

May 1. Birth of the Duke of Connaught. The Duke of Wellington's 81st birthday.

May 30. Ashley stops Sunday posts.

June 29. Palmerston's "Civis Romanus sum" speech.

July 2. Death of Sir Robert Peel.

July. Lord John Russell announces an Oxford University Commission. Gladstone denounces it.

Sept. The draymen of Messrs Barclay & Perkins maltreat General Haynau.

Sept. 24. Brief of Pope "under the Seal of the Fisherman," dividing England into Dioceses.

Oct. 7. Cardinal Wiseman's Pastoral.

1851

Yeast.
Gladstone's Letters on Naples to Aberdeen.

Feb. 20. Government defeated. Lord John Russell resigns.

Feb. 25. He returns to office on Stanley's failure to form a Ministry.

May. The Great Exhibition.

July 29. Ecclesiastical Titles Bill passed.

Oct. Kossuth arrives in England.

Dec. 2. Napoleon's *Coup d'État.*

Dec. 17. Lord John Russell dismisses Palmerston.

1852

London Labour and the London Poor (Mayhew).
Disraeli's *Life of Lord George Bentinck.*
Great Lock-Out of Engineers.
Industrial and Provident Societies Act passed by Tory Government.

Feb. 4. Convocation revived. (Suspended since 1717.)

Feb. 21. Palmerston's "Tit for Tat." He turns out Lord John Russell.

Feb. 23. Lord Derby becomes Prime Minister; Lord St Leonards, Lord Chancellor; Disraeli Chancellor of the Exchequer.

July 26. Conference of Co-operative Societies.

July. General Election. Tories gain about 30 seats.
Palmerston heckled by Rowcliffe the butcher.
Bulwer Lytton M.P. for Hertfordshire (till 1866).

Sept. 14. Death of the Duke of Wellington.

Dec. 11. The new Parliament meets.

Dec. 16. Tories beaten on Disraeli's Budget. Resignation of Derby.

Dec. 28. Aberdeen's Administration. Gladstone Chancellor of the Exchequer.

1853

Bleak House.
Mr Sponge's Sporting Tour.

Feb. Clarendon Foreign Secretary.

April 18. Gladstone's first Budget; he receives compliments from the Queen and the Prince Consort.

Aug. 22. Lord Robert Cecil, M.P. for Stamford.

Oct. 14. English and French fleets proceed to Constantinople at request of Sultan.

Oct. 27. Maurice expelled from Professorship by King's College.

Nov. 30. Turkish fleet destroyed at Sinope.

Dec. 15. Palmerston resigns, but shortly afterwards resumes office. Unpopularity of Prince Consort.

1854

Hard Times.

Jan. Newspaper attacks on Prince Consort.

Jan. 22. Stockmar's Letter to Prince Consort on the British Constitution.

Feb. 7. Recall of Russian Ambassador.

Mar. 7. Reform Club dinner to Sir Charles Napier.

Mar. 28. War declared.

Apr. 24. "Day of Humiliation."

Sep. 20. Alma.

Oct. 25. Balaklava.

Dec. Derby's "Too Late" speech.

1855

The Warden.
Maud.
Sanitary Commission.

Jan. 14. Prince Consort's *Memorandum* on Army Organization.

Jan. 24. End of Aberdeen Administration.

Feb. 5. Palmerston Prime Minister. Clarendon Foreign Secretary a second time. Granville Leader of the House of Lords from now till 1865 (also from 1868-1891).

June 15. The stamp on newspapers abolished.

Aug. The Queen at St Cloud.

Sept. 9. Fall of Sebastopol. Palmerston recommends Jowett to the Queen for the Greek Professorship at Oxford.

1856

Mar. 30. Treaty of Paris.

Apr. 29. Proclamation of Peace.

July Duke of Cambridge Commander-in-Chief of the British Army (till 1895).

1857

Barchester Towers.
Little Dorrit.
The Divorce Act.
Chinese War.

March. Beginning of Indian Mutiny.

Mar. 4. Government beaten on Cobden's Canton Resolution. General Election. Bright, Cobden, Layard, Milner Gibson unseated. Rout of "Manchester" school.

Apr. 30. New Parliament meets.

June 25. Prince Albert created Prince Consort.

Sept. 14. Assault of Delhi.

Sept. 25. Relief of the Residency at Lucknow.

Oct. 7. "Day of Fast and Humiliation."

1858

Ask Mamma.
Dr Thorne.

Jan. 25. Marriage of Princess Royal to Prince Frederick William of Prussia.

Feb. 19. Government beaten on Conspiracy Bill. Lord Derby Prime Minister for the second time.

Sept. 1. The government of the East India Company ceases.

Nov. Gladstone Lord High Commissioner to the Ionian Isles.

1859

The Origin of Species.

Idylls of the King.

The Prince of Wales matriculates at Oxford. He makes a tour in Ireland.

Disraeli's Reform Bill.

The Volunteer Force is inaugurated.

Jan. 29. Birth of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

April. Dissolution of Parliament. Tories gain 30 seats. Sir W. Harcourt unsuccessfully contests Kirkcaldy burghs.

May 1. Thanksgiving for pacification of India.

June 11. Government defeated on the Address, on Hartington moving a vote of No Confidence.

June 24. Solferino.

July 12. Agreement of Villafranca.

Oct. 16. Harper's Ferry.

Dec. 28. Death of Macaulay.

1860

Income Tax raised from 5d. to 10d.

Feb. Gladstone's Budget triumph.

March. His commercial treaty concluded.

Apr. 23. Savoy and Nice vote for annexation to France.

June 11. Lord John Russell's Reform Bill withdrawn.

Nov. 6. Abraham Lincoln President of the United States.

1861

Essays and Reviews.

Framley Parsonage.

Repeal of Paper Duty.

Mar. 3. Emancipation of Russian serfs.

Mar. 16. Death of Duchess of Kent.

Apr. 13. Beginning of American Civil War.

June 22. Death of Lord Campbell; Lord Westbury succeeds as Lord Chancellor.

July 21. Battle of Bull Run.

Nov. 8. Seizure of Confederate envoys on British Steamer *Trent*. Guards and other troops dispatched to Canada.

Dec. 14. Death of Prince Consort.

1862

June 16. Federals defeated near Charleston.

1863

Mar. 7. The Prince of Wales married to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

July 1. Gettysburg.

Dec. 23. Death of Thackeray, *æt.* fifty-two.

German troops enter Holstein.

1864

The Small House at Allington.

Synodical condemnation of *Essays and Reviews*.

May 11. Gladstone's Universal Suffrage Speech in House of Commons.

Nov. 12. Death of Leech. Du Maurier succeeds him at *Punch's* table.

1865

Atalanta in Calydon.
Our Mutual Friend.

April 9. Surrender of Lee at Appomattox court-house.
April 14. Assassination of Lincoln.
July 7. Westbury gives up the Great Seal.
July 18. Gladstone defeated at Oxford, but returned for Lancashire.
Oct. 18. Death of Palmerston. Russell Prime Minister. Gladstone Leader of House of Commons. Clarendon Foreign Secretary a third time.

1866

Poems and Ballads.

Mar. 12. Introduction of Lord John Russell's Reform Bill.
June 15. War begins between Austria and Prussia.
June 18. Defeat of Government.
July 6. Derby Prime Minister a third time.
July 23. Hyde Park railings torn down.
July 3. Königgrätz.

1867

Last Chronicle of Barset.

Aug. 15. The Reform Bill receives the Royal Assent.
Dec. Russell retires. Gladstone becomes Liberal Leader.

1868

Feb. 25. Derby retires. Disraelli Prime Minister.
May 26. Last public execution in front of Newgate.
Dec. 2. Resignation of Disraeli. Gladstone Prime Minister. Clarendon Foreign Secretary for fourth time.

1869

Culture and Anarchy.

July 26. Gladstone's Bill to disestablish Irish Church receives Royal Assent.
Oct. 23. Death of Derby.
Dec. 16. Wilberforce enthroned at Winchester.

1870

Edwin Drood.
Lothair.

June 9. Death of Dickens.
June 27. Death of Clarendon.
July 19. War declared between France and Germany.
Sept. 2. Capitulation of Sedan.
Sept. 7. Jowett appointed Master of Balliol.

1871

Friendship's Garland.

Feb. 16. End of Franco-German War.

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